

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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Challenges in Transitioning into Ministry

Empathic Attending in Pastoral Diagnosis

With the Wisdom, Weave a Dream

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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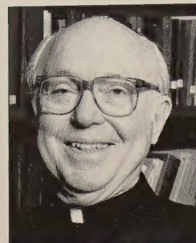
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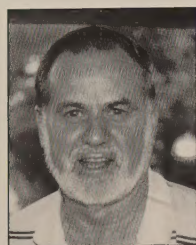
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The editors of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT are pleased to consider for publication articles relating to the ongoing work of those involved in helping other people through religious leadership and formation, spiritual direction, education, and counseling.

Manuscripts should be submitted to the Editor-in-Chief, Robert M. Hamma (rhmma@regis.edu) as an e-mail attachment. Please allow four to six weeks time for a response.

Manuscripts are received with the understanding that they have not been previously published and are not currently under consideration elsewhere. Feature articles should be limited to 4,500 words (15 double-spaced pages), with no more than 6 recommended readings; filler items of between 500 and 1,000 words will be considered. All accepted material is subject to editing. When quoting the Bible, the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible is preferred.

Authors are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of proper names in both text and bibliography. Acknowledgments must be given when substantial material is quoted from other publications. Provide author name(s), title of article, title of journal or book, volume number, page(s), month and year, and publisher's permission to use material.

Letters are welcome and will be published as space permits and at the discretion of the editors. Such communications should not exceed 600 words and are subject to editing.

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Editor's Page

The Quality of Our Pastoral Conversations



This issue of **HUMAN DEVELOPMENT** was not planned around the theme of pastoral conversation. However, as I reread the articles, it emerged as a common thread, particularly in the first three articles. What is a pastoral conversation? In his article "Apophatic Attending in Pastoral Diagnosis," Thomas E. Rodgers describes pastoral conversations as an attempt to understand what is going on and how to help. He describes five qualities that mark such exchanges. Pastoral conversations are: respectful of the other, setting aside pre-conceived ideas and pre-judgments; reverent of the mystery of the other, seeking to enter the realm that is beyond words; at home with silence, knowing that the deepest truth often lies hidden there; transformative, inviting one to forget the past and step into the future; and connecting, discovering new patterns of relationships where none were known.

The pastoral nature of a conversation flows not only in how one attends to another, but in the stance from which one attends to the other. Rodgers points out that whether it is a dialogue between peers or a helping relationship, when one attends to the other "from the wordless, unknowable, unspeakable experience that is internalized through an ongoing contemplative practice in his or her life," the conversation is pastoral.

Barbara Sutton and Ted Dunn address two other contexts in which pastoral conversations make all the difference: the experience of newly missioned lay ecclesial ministers, and the process of forging a transforming vision for religious life.

Without oversimplifying the fine research that Sutton and her colleagues conducted on the experience of new lay ecclesial ministers, one could say that the absence of pastoral conversation was at the heart of the problems the new ministers encountered. It seems no coincidence that they named their retreat for ministers in transition *Conversatio*. And their program takes as its inspiration the gospel account of Jesus' conversation with the disciples on the road to Emmaus.

In discussing the creation of a transformative vision for religious life, Ted Dunn describes it as "a journey that seeks to transform the very culture of community through holy and intimate conversations, loving and reconciling exchanges and communal discernment of God's call." Here we see some of the same qualities that Thomas Rodgers highlighted, though expressed in slightly different language: transformative, holy, intimate, loving, reconciling, discerning. We might also add the word difficult to this list. As Dunne notes, "Transposing dreams into viable visions requires some challenging conversations."

My hope is that these articles, and others in this issue, may lead you to reflect on the quality of your conversations. These will include those that are explicitly pastoral, but think about all those other conversations that occur in the course of your day: with your family, co-workers, friends, and people who provide for your needs. What is the quality of your *attending to* these persons? And what is the stance that you *attend from* as you encounter them?

CHANGES IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

This is now our second issue in a new design. We hope that you find it attractive and conducive to your reading of the magazine. Our thanks to Renee Holtz at Regis University who patiently went through numerous rounds of revision in response to our feedback. Our thanks go to D. Paul Brocker as well, who is retiring as executive assistant to Regis's president Michael Sheeran, S.J. Paul has provided invaluable direction and assistance to our team since HD was welcomed into the Regis family.

In recent years, Regis has generously provided a substantial subsidy to the costs involved in publishing **HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**. Their support has not flagged through difficult economic times because they value the contribution that **HUMAN DEVELOPMENT** makes to the church, both in the United States and throughout the world. While Regis will continue to offer this support in the future, it is time to raise the price of a subscription. Rates have not changed since 2004. Over the past seven years costs have increased steadily, especially for postage. Beginning September 1 the new subscription rates will be as follows:


U.S.	\$49
Foreign	\$53
Online	\$24

The new rates will appear on your next statement. These rates are for one-year subscriptions; we will no longer offer two-year subscriptions. The online subscription offers a substantial savings and we encourage you, if you have access to the Internet, to take advantage of it. It offers earlier delivery of each issue and it won't get lost in the mail. And it is good for the environment too!

It is our sincere hope that you will continue to value **HUMAN DEVELOPMENT** as an important resource for your ministry as well as your own personal enrichment.

Robert M. Hamma

Robert M. Hamma



Challenges in Transitioning into Ministry

A Difficult Journey from Emmaus

Barbara Sutton

Mary Clare graduated from Saint John's School of Theology/Seminary (OTSEM) and began her first ministry position at a midsize suburban parish as director of religious education. She was anxious going in because she was filling a position held by a religious leader for twenty years. She often wondered, "How will I measure up? Will people accept the leadership of someone much younger?" Everything was fine for the first three months, then "it all broke loose," she said. "The honeymoon was over. I learned that there were different camps in the parish: those in the Father knows best camp, those passionate about empowering lay leaders, those who didn't trust anyone and those who wanted to return to an imagined golden age. The staff resented my Pollyanna-ish

view of community. Whenever I tried to raise a theological point in our infrequent staff meetings, the youth minister would smirk and remind me we were no longer at Saint John's. When I talked with the pastor about my frustration of working in isolation and having to be so careful about what I said to whom, he just shrugged and said, "Do the best that you can." At the end of her first year, Mary Clare realized that work had become her life. She had lost herself—failing to find time for Sabbath, frequently eating fast foods and losing contact with her good friends. She thought to herself, "Maybe I should look for another position—or profession."

Emmaus Hall holds a central place for graduate theological education at

Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota. Once the dormitory for seminarians, it now houses classrooms and provides housing for students preparing for monastic life, lay ecclesial ministry and the diaconate. Eighty percent of currently enrolled students are lay. Charged with oversight of ministerial formation for our graduate students and our life-long learning program, I was curious about how our recent graduates, especially those new to lay ecclesial ministry, would describe their experience of beginning ministry. As a faculty we always hope they are equipped with the spiritual, theological, and practical resources necessary for inner strength and empowering confidence as they encounter exciting new opportunities and the challenges posed by the complexities of ministry

today. But I wondered: how did they fare as pastoral leaders, what spiritual and ministerial practices sustained them, what supported or hindered their transition, and how did ministerial formation at the SOTSEM prepare them to live out their vocations as ministers?

With funding from the Lilly Endowment, two others joined me in research: Marian Diaz, Director of the Vocation Project at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University and Genevieve Mougey, M.Div. candidate, Saint John's School of Theology/Seminary.

Recent research by James Wind and David Wood reports countless pastoral leaders, across all denominations, leaving the ministry discouraged, disillusioned and defeated within their first five years of service. The reasons include feeling unable to meet the needs of the job, lacking adequate training to cope with ministry demands, and diminished self-esteem.

A Saint John's student's journey to Emmaus in Collegetown and then into active ministry is not immune to this disillusionment. Nor is disillusionment some kind of a personal failing. It is a common phenomenon that happens as people make the transition from graduate theological studies to their first ministry positions. This is true for both Catholic and Protestant ministers, although the focus in Catholic studies has been primarily on clergy. See, for instance, Hoge et. al., *The First Five Years of Priesthood*, and for data on Protestant theology students, see <http://www.transitionintoministry.org>. Graduate theological education provides shelter while faith and understanding is deepened and pastoral imagination is stirred.

In summer 2008, a small group of SOTSEM alums who had graduated in the past five years gathered to reflect on what strengthened and hindered their ministerial practice during their first position in ministry.

They identified as strengths good supervisors who were also mentors, adequate budgets that supported continuing education and ongoing formation, self-discipline, well-defined positions, balanced workloads, and their own self-knowledge gained through peers, counseling and spiritual direction. Hindrances to their first years in ministry were excessive job expectations; exaggerated expectations, lack of compensatory time, failure to make room for Sabbath, poor supervision, unjust wages, long commutes, budgetary constraints, a culture of fear and scarcity, lack of self-understanding, inadequate family leave and health



polices, personal situations and crisis, inability to express one's own needs, inadequate staffing, and not being taken seriously by other staff members.

In this initial session, our team listened deeply to the ministers and to the various dynamics at play in their stories and the theological reflection upon them. The dynamics included stages of life-cycle development, a sense of personal and professional competence, organizational systems, family of origin issues, and leadership development. Participants engaged each other in theological reflection as they sought to identify areas of particular difficulty in ministry. For some, the issue was about their understanding of ministerial identity. For others, the key issues were staff competition, inability to read a context or a group's dynamics,

or lack of knowledge about introducing change. Common issues included soft interpersonal boundaries and a lack of Sabbath time.

Conversation with this group of graduates increased our interest in further study. Their insights and observations helped frame questions that the School of Theology/Seminary should be thinking about as we prepare students for ecclesial leadership and equip them for transition into active ministry. In Spring 2009, forty of 167 alums who had graduated within the past five years responded to an on-line survey about their transition into ministry. The goals of the research were to:

- ① examine how the SOTSEM equips students for their first professional pastoral ministry position upon graduation,
- ② identify activities that support the human and spiritual dimensions of ministerial identity and pastoral practices,
- ③ surface key issues that support or hinder effective transitions in ministry, and
- ④ develop a feedback loop for the SOT that will strengthen the curriculum for ministerial formation as well as life-long commitment to vocation. The survey was developed and interpreted through the four lenses of ministerial formation described in *Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*: spiritual, human, pastoral and intellectual formation.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

At the SOTSEM students have access to resources for spiritual direction, group spiritual companioning, retreats and community prayer as well as all the resources afforded students from the University and the two monastic communities who support the University and nearby College of Saint Benedict. Ninety-two percent of those surveyed felt that the spiritual formation gained at the SOTSEM impacted their pastoral practices. How? Spiritual formation was fleshed out in the following categories

and ranked in descending order according to the extent of impact on their life as a pastoral minister in the following order of priority: ① paying attention to the kinds of learning needed for a new ministerial position, ② developing pastoral insight and resourcefulness through ongoing habits of reflection on practice, ③ maintaining appropriate, though not rigid, boundaries between personal and family life and work, ④ developing regular spiritual disciplines, ⑤ nurturing “poly” friendships outside of places of ministerial practice, ⑥ being diligent in self-care concerning one’s overall well-being.

Several respondents noted that the greatest gift they received at the SOTSEM was their theological education. The impact of this is evident in the high ranking for learning needed for a new ministerial position and their ability to reflect theologically on the practice of ministry. Maintaining good personal practices of healthy eating, an annual physical and good dental health were important practices; however physical exercise and leisure received a lower commitment in their wellness plan. Many noted the importance of faithfully taking two days off (67 percent) and enjoying friends and family outside their ministry setting.

However, self-care, recreation and relaxation seem neglected or underdeveloped with only one-third of the respondents noting the positive extent of such self-care on their life as a pastoral minister. When asked what spiritual practices they continue to do each day, the leading responses were: private prayer, Liturgy of the Hours, *lectio divina*, weekly church worship, group spiritual companionship, and spiritual direction. Disappointingly, our responders noted they have less spiritual practices. One respondent described his spiritual life in these words: “I feel now that I have transitioned



out of a setting with academics, prayer, and community and am not sticking to any kind of balanced life or place. Spiritual direction is not available in the rural areas, so my spiritual life is out of balance and the work place does not encourage me to find balance. I am not encouraged to go on retreats outside of vacation days. It is a constant struggle."

HUMAN DIMENSION

The scope of the pastoral tasks and a lack of practical experience in ministry can leave a new ecclesial leader susceptible to the perfect storm. No longer faced with the urgent demands of papers, exams and reading lists, the lay ecclesial minister delights in the adventure of all the first time ministry experiences, such as launching a program, meeting with boards, designing the first prayer service. If the minister is inattentive, this baptismal zeal may be blindsided by interpersonal conflict, dysfunctional group dynamics and parishioners' expectations for 24/7 service. Then joy begins to fade and the elegant dance of ministry turns into an awkward, painful stepping on toes. The fledgling lay ecclesial minister begins to lose a sense of self, struggling to keep the peace by telling the community "what people want to hear" rather than what the new fledgling leader knows to be true. The new person's ministerial identity is challenged before it has the chance to be firmly established. Typical words that respondents in our study used to describe their first position in ministry were "supported,

overburdened and unbalanced." The four greatest areas of conflict identified by these new ministers were styles of pastoral leadership, expectations beyond the job, getting people to think outside the box, and developing or changing a program.

PASTORAL FORMATION

The survey respondents were generally positive regarding their ministerial formation, noting that clinical pastoral education and theological reflection were very helpful in developing pastoral insights into the practice of ministry. From this group of alums, we learned that despite the challenges ministry poses, they were able to grow in their self-confidence and strengthen their ministerial identity. Over time they became increasingly comfortable acting in an ecclesial leadership role and less afraid to claim and act upon their authority. As important as collegial support seems to be, several respondents in the survey noted that lack of trust among colleagues often inhibits gathering with peers to reflect theologically on ministry. Moreover many felt that the SOTSEM curriculum should be more intentional about how to introduce change in the life of a community and how to think outside the box when considering pastoral possibilities. New ministers told us that performance evaluation was not normative, and that conflict was not always "pastor-centered." They all challenged us—and themselves—to talk about the grounds for disillusionment in ministry

and the reasons for not abandoning the call to ministerial service.

THE ROAD FROM EMMAUS

Our students at the SOTSEM make the walk to and through Emmaus Hall daily. Sometimes overwhelmed by reading, research, writing and exams, apprenticeship for ministry becomes objectified. Lost is the journey of openness to the Spirit and conversion to authentic discipleship. Lifelines of spiritual nourishment and reflection become optional rather than obligatory. Soon one's life is no longer one's own. The Emmaus story (Luke 24:13-35) reminds us of the power of the present to capture our attention—and not to bury our hope without an eye to the future with its rightful claims. We need mentors, spiritual directors and companions on the journey to startle and disturb us—to help us see past the present.

Drawn into the Road to Emmaus text, I am startled not by where the two disciples were going but rather where they were coming from—Jerusalem and the community of disciples—the place where their hope was sustained, if only briefly. Only seven miles into the journey and they had already become depressed and disillusioned! How quickly the journey gets bogged down in busywork and distractions, causing one to forget the "ways of the most high." This destination theology leaves one fatigued, numbed and sometimes simply trying to survive. It does not provide the space to recognize God and all that God has done in one's life. If left to one's



own devices, one may begin to think that the ability to complete a check list of things to do is really the benchmark for discipleship.

THE THRESHOLD

The crossing over from graduate theological education to ministry involves putting to the test theological scholarship, scriptural exegesis and pastoral insights in the context of a new faith community, a new neighborhood and a new pastoral staff. Effective crossing over can be enhanced in the interviewing process between employer and applicant, with an eye toward vocational fit, institutional culture and the pastoral needs of the community. The transition can be smoother when there is genuine welcome and orientation to a new position and placement. One recent graduate described his welcome and orientation in these words, "The first day of work I felt really awkward. It was different than my former work as a teacher. I was not prepared for the differences. I was not even shown how to get into the building. No one greeted me, I just went to my office. There was no guidance as to what to do, no initiation or welcome. No one seemed to know what it meant to collaborate or support each other in their ministry. I am finding it difficult not to leave others around me with the same enthusiasm, experience of community or a deep faith journey they are willing to share and engage." Perhaps this story resonates with the lyrics from *Les Misérables*: "But the tigers come at night/ With their voices soft as thunder/ As they tear your hopes apart/ And they turn your dreams into shame."

Insights gained from this research will help the SOTSEM strengthen the curriculum for ministerial formation both in the immediate preparation students need to begin ministerial practice and in cultivating the disciplines and practices they need to sustain life-long commitment to their

vocations. This research and our ongoing listening to students and alumni strengthen our commitment to ministerial formation and provide a feedback loop for the SOTSEM. Discerning the results has led to adaptation in the curriculum for ministerial formation. For instance, a day retreat has been developed for graduating students to explore several topics—dealing with their own anxieties as they approach graduation, interviewing for a ministry position, transitioning from graduate theological education to their first ministry position, developing a supportive network outside the ministry setting, attending to their family life, and maintaining healthy spiritual, emotional and physical practices. Additionally, the SOTSEM sponsored a retreat for married students and their spouses to explore the spirituality and sacramentality of their relationship as well as the dual vocations of the lay ecclesial minister—marriage and the call to ministry. A Minister in Transition retreat for alumni graduating within the past five years is offered through our continuing education program, *Conversatio*. The research also influences our orientation to pastoral ministry and conversations in the classroom. It is naive to think that one automatically knows how to minister or practice self-care because a person has the desire and has heard the call. Our curriculum for ministerial formation and pastoral leadership fosters skills as a reflective practitioner for the sake of both the lay ecclesial minister and the communities they serve.

We learned the importance to ministers of having opportunities to talk together about their transition experiences and to receive the support and guidance for renewing and deepening their commitment to ministry. Graduates participating in the study left us with some lingering questions:

- How do we develop skills for a discerning spirit for the best ministry placement for a person's gifts?

- How can we nurture a spirit of welcome for lay ecclesial ministers into the parish or other setting?
- How can we diminish the competitive spirit among lay ecclesial ministers and build trust and blessed connections?
- How can we form students in a spirit of ecclesial-building rather than dismantling?
- What ministerial environment supports transformational leadership?
- What are best practices for supervisors in ministry?

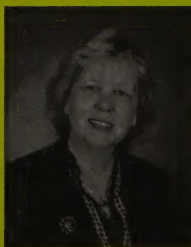
Our effort through *Conversatio* is one way we continue our commitment to walk with graduates on their lifelong journey to Emmaus. We regularly convene sustaining conversations that call attention to what blocks the Spirit's movement and provide the place for ministers to listen attentively to one another as they pour out their stories. Like Christ did on the road to Emmaus, companions and mentors give the story back, piece by piece, explaining the fear and pain, holding out resurrection hope.

RECOMMENDED READING

Hoge, D., et. al. *The First Five Years of Priesthood: A Study of Newly Ordained Catholic Priests*. Collegeville, MN.: Liturgical Press, 2002.

Wind, J. P. and D. J. Wood. *Becoming A Pastor: Reflection on the Transitions into Ministry*. Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 2008.

USCCB. *Co-workers in the Vineyard: A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry*. Washington, DC: USCCB, 2005.



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The evolutionary development of and the current ambivalence around pastoral diagnosis reminds us of a key element necessary for caregivers in which it is necessary not only to pay attention to the kataphatic side of pastoral diagnosis (stating what the diagnosis is), but also to the apophatic side of pastoral diagnosis (stating what the diagnosis is not).

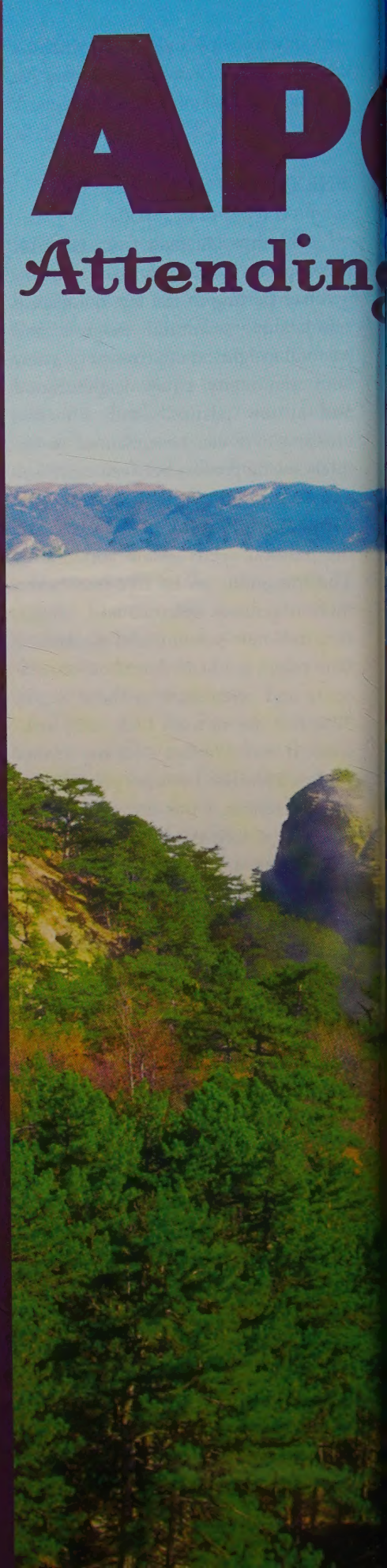
HISTORICAL DISTINCTIONS IN PASTORAL DIAGNOSIS

Whether we identify ourselves as spiritual directors, ministers, chaplains, pastoral counselors, directors of formation, parish priests, lay counselors, or even “secular” counselors with an interest in spirituality, any attempt to fully understand and offer care to those who seek our help begins with a process of assessment and diagnosis. This forms the basis of any care-giving intervention. While the term “pastoral diagnosis” has not always been used, the process of evaluating the nature of the problem for the purpose of helping another has been at the heart of pastoral conversations throughout history.

Seward Hiltner suggested that if diagnosis were appraisal, examination, or evaluation then the first appearance of diagnosis in Christian history had to do with the evaluation for membership in the church. This was not only in terms of evaluating readiness for membership, but in times of persecution when persons recanted their faith, was also for diagnosing their ability to be readmitted to the church. Once Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, there emerged books of penitentials with guidelines for “diagnosing” the nature of an offense against the community or God and the penance to be done for restoration. The penitentials were followed by pastoral theology and moral theology in Roman Catholicism. “Moral theology became the codification of moral principles based on religious premises and pastoral theology codified the individual situations” (Hiltner, 1976, 575). While Protestants refused to have case books, they, too, made evaluations of sin and determinations about the genuineness of repentance in their form of pastoral diagnosis.

In his book, *A History of Pastoral Care in America: From Salvation to Self-Realization*, Brooks Holifield notes that, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, clerical counselors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries focused upon diagnoses that allowed for the remedy of sin for the cure of souls. Following the directives of the Fourth Lateran Council, which required every adult to confess at least once a year to the local priest, “the Catholic moral theologians of the sixteenth century completed the process by elaborating a complex body of casuistry—the application of general principles to particular cases—which promised to solve every spiritual dilemma that anyone could imagine” (Holifield, 1983, 17). Protestants, on the other hand, sought ways of detecting sin as faithlessness, spiritual deadness, idolatry, or disorder with innovative methods for diagnosing the emotional components of repentance, the nature of a rebellious will, spiritual pride, or temptation, and a later turn to the intricacies of inward piety and the assurance of salvation. The diagnostic tone of these initiatives might be seen in the title of a book authored by Richard Greenham in 1599 entitled, *Godly Instructions for the Due Examinations and Direction of All Men*. By 1656

APC Attending



Thomas E. Rodgers, Ph.D.

PHATIC

and Pastoral Diagnosis



when Richard Baxter wrote *The Reformed Pastor*, urging clergy to spend more time in personal conversations with parishioners, "... he could assume the existence of a comprehensive literature teaching the pastor how to converse with individuals about spiritual matters" (24). Accompanying this focus on remedies for sin variously defined, Protestants by the seventeenth century would follow the Catholic initiative, seen often in spiritual direction, of envisioning the cure of souls as a process marked by development through identifiable stages or levels. "If sin were one side of the pastoral equation, salvation was the other, and salvation was obtained through a process of development" (25).

THE MODERN AMBIVALENCE IN PASTORAL DIAGNOSIS

As Holifield's subtitle suggests, there would be further movements in the nature of pastoral care and pastoral diagnosis that would move from themes of salvation to themes of self-realization in the nineteenth and twentieth century. As theological winds shifted, as the progression of human knowledge emerged, and as social and political climates changed, pastoral diagnosis would alter its language or approach, but the process of evaluating the nature of a problem for the purpose of helping another remained constant.

Pastoral diagnosis in the twentieth century was affected by two very different trends. On the one hand, pastoral diagnosis, which had become focused on sin and salvation, gravitated toward moralistic and behavioral advice-giving. This led Seward Hiltner (1976, 578) to remark,

I draw the general conclusion that pastors and churches, far from having had no experience with diagnosis, have had so many bad experiences with it that, when they move out of a legalistic framework and

genuinely want to help people, the last resource they are likely to look for is diagnosis. . . . We cannot, therefore resurrect pastoral diagnosis without reconstructing it.

On the other hand, diagnosis in the twentieth century became the prerogative of the medical profession and pastoral care became enamored with psychological ways of understanding and categorizing the human condition. Edward Stein (1980, 22) commenting on the possibility that pastoral caregivers had lost their identity, said,

One reason Freud and Jung "rescued" theology for the modern age . . . is that they gave us tools to deal with man's true iconic depths, depths that pious and banal moralisms and preaching often missed by a thinly disguised legalism and/or grace so generally applied that it resembled a doctor lining up his pneumonic patients and spraying penicillin at them instead of injecting it in their veins. One can scarcely fault the enthusiasms that carried pastoral psychology along when pastors began to discover the "injection methods" of depth psychology and pagan doctors were introduced to us.

But the excitement around new "injection methods" of care was tempered by a concern that the "pastoral" was being left out of pastoral diagnosis and that "diagnosis" had become overly focused on pathology as in the medical model. This led Seward Hiltner (1976, 581) to remark that,

A valid new pastoral diagnosis must, in addition to exploring what is uniquely pastoral, rethink the basic meaning of any diagnosis, and not permit medicine or psychiatry to dictate the definition of what is to

be included in and excluded from the meaning of diagnosis.

This ambivalence around pastoral diagnosis was picked up by Paul Pruyser in his classic work, *The Minister as Diagnostician*. He suggested that the hesitation to diagnose came from a history of pastoral diagnosis that tended towards advice, judgment, direction, control, and being limited to the "examination of conscience." As well, there was the anti-diagnostic bias of the then popular client-centered ways of listening, and the modern tendency to relinquish "diagnosis" to the medical profession. Advocating for a form of evaluation that was both pastoral and diagnostic while being sensitive to advances in modern medicine, Pruyser (1976, 61-73) suggested six diagnostic variables for use in pastoral assessment:

- ❶ the person's *awareness of the Holy* (Is anything sacred to the person or held in reverence? What is regarded as untouchable or inscrutable?);
- ❷ the person's understanding of *Providence* (What is the "Divine Purpose" in its intention toward myself? Why am I so besieged? Why me?);
- ❸ the person's living out of *Faith* not as a set of beliefs but in terms of engagement with life and the "courage to be";
- ❹ the person's understanding of *Grace or Gratefulness* (Is there an attitude of gratitude toward life? Can one accept and offer forgiveness?);
- ❺ the person's understanding of *Repentance* (Does the person accept responsibility for his or her situation, neither too little or too much?); and
- ❻ the person's understanding of *Communion* (Is the person fundamentally embedded or estranged, open to the world or encapsulated, in touch or isolated, united or separated?).

From the two threads woven into the longer history of pastoral diagnosis, Paul Pruyser picked up on the thread of finding diagnostic categories. James Fowler, on the other hand, picked up on the thread of stages of growth or

development in his classic work, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*. Attempting to integrate spirituality (from any faith tradition) with modern psychological (structural-developmental) theories of human development, Fowler suggested seven stages of faith (Fowler, 1987, 57-77): *Primal Faith* (infancy, the incorporative self), *Intuitive-Projective Faith* (early childhood, the impulsive self); *Mythic-Literal Faith* (childhood and beyond, the imperial self); *Synthetic-Conventional Faith* (adolescence and beyond, the interpersonal self); *Individuative-Reflective Faith* (young adulthood and beyond, the institutional self); *Conjunctive Faith* (early midlife and beyond, the inter-individual self); and *Universalizing Faith* (midlife and beyond, the God-grounded self). Reflecting on Fowler's work, Carl Schneider (1986, 229) saw it as a major advance over alternative attempts to develop a pastoral diagnostic framework because it was organized around faith itself and did not reduce faith to some other category; because it had a developmental approach; because it was multidimensional and interdisciplinary; because it was structural rather than thematic and universally applicable; and because it organized a variety of aspects of human existence into a coherent framework.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ASSUMPTIONS IN PASTORAL DIAGNOSIS

Since the classic works of Pruyser and Fowler, there have been further developments of Pruyser's work by Newton Maloney (1988) and Wesley Brun (2005) and a lone call by Donald Denton (2008) for research towards an Axis VI for spiritual issues, adding to Axis I through V of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV*. But, overall there remains a hesitation to diagnose. This is happening at the same time as a proliferation of ways to go about a spiritual assessment, emerging

from research in the psychology of religion that now distinguishes spirituality from religion and embraces spirituality as an important multicultural variable.

While we still might not use the term "pastoral diagnosis," or might be ambivalent about its use, the reality is that we engage in some form of assessment and diagnosis in order to fully understand and offer care to those who seek our help. Usually that form of assessment and diagnosis blends some form of theology and some form of psychology and science in an attempt to understand what is going on and how to help those with whom we have entered into a pastoral conversation.

With the proliferation of ways to make a spiritual assessment and with some continuing ambivalence around pastoral diagnosis, how does one decide the approach to take in helping those who seek us out for pastoral care? The post-modern answer to that question would be, "It depends." It depends upon the context of the pastoral conversation. Are we talking bedside in a hospital room? Are we in a private practice pastoral counseling office? Are we conducting research? Are we on a spiritual retreat? The questions we ask, the approach we take to give care to another, depends upon the context. But, it also depends upon the history, training, and assumptions of the pastoral practitioner. Nancy Ramsey (1998, 1) in her book, *Pastoral Diagnosis: A Resource for Ministries of Care and Counseling*, says, "Diagnosis is an evaluative process of discerning the nature of another's difficulty in order to provide an appropriate and restorative response. *Diagnosis is never neutral. It always reiterates the anthropological and philosophical assumptions of the practitioner.* It is an inherently hermeneutical process." (Italics are mine.) Without suggesting any pastoral diagnostic categories, Ramsey (1998, 1) says, "Pastoral diagnosis differs from diagnosis defined by various therapeutic paradigms because of the explicit

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theological contexts in which the anthropological and philosophical assumptions of practitioners are rooted." The key to pastoral diagnosis, she says, is the *formation of pastoral identity*, the intentional process of developing and articulating a theological self-consciousness on the part of the practitioner, and with this pastoral identity *attending* to the religious significance of experience.

Building upon this, I would advocate that the elusive nature of pastoral diagnosis is more than a post-modern hesitation, but is rooted in essential aspects of the *formation* of pastoral practitioners and the very process not only of what they *attend to*, but what they *attend from*. The "wisdom" that underlies the caregiver's choice of questions for spiritual assessment, evaluation, or diagnosis, the ways of thinking about the answers to those questions, and the suggestions for intervention based upon those questions can vary widely from caregiver to caregiver, the result of the *caregiver's own* history, training, and assumptive world *from which they attend*.

FROM A KATAPHATIC TO AN APOPHATIC APPROACH IN PASTORAL DIAGNOSIS

Perhaps pastoral diagnosis remains so elusive because at its core we are dealing with something that is unspeakable and unknowable; unspeakable in the same way that the Jewish tradition will not speak the name of God because it is so sacred; unspeakable in the same way that the apophatic tradition of prayer would say that we can know only by entering a cloud of unknowing. Whereas a kataphatic approach to pastoral diagnosis might look to research and finding theological categories that could be a "knowing apart or through" (Greek: *dia* + *gnosis*), an apophatic approach to pastoral diagnosis would see diagnosis more as a wise

discernment that specifically looks to the unknown and unknowable for the possibility of revelation that is beyond words (Greek: *apophasis* coming from the verb *apophemi* and meaning "saying no" or "saying negatively"; or *apophasis* coming from the verb *apopaino* with overtones of "revelation").

Pastoral conversations have a respectful attitude of "not knowing" that attempts to set aside our pre-conceived ideas and pre-judgments of any person, problem, or worldview so that we might truly be present and listen, not unlike Nicholas of Cusa's "learned ignorance" before God. Pastoral conversations seek to enter the unspeakable, incomprehensible darkness in a person's life that may be connected with trauma, unconscious patterns, doubts about God, or emerging thoughts still beyond words, not unlike Gregory of Nyssa's discovery that darkness could be an appropriate way to find God as he reflected upon Exodus 20:21, "And the people stood far off while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was." Pastoral conversations wait for, are not afraid of, and enter into moments of deep silence, not unlike Dionysius' plea to the Trinity to, "Guide us to that topmost height of mystic lore which exceedeth light and more than exceedeth knowledge, where the simple, absolute, and unchangeable mysteries of heavenly Truth lie hidden in the dazzling obscurity of the secret Silence, outshining all brilliance with the intensity of their darkness. . . ." Pastoral conversations invite those who receive care into a true forgetting—forgetting their intellectual constructions of self and life, forgetting the negative self-talk, guilt and pain—not unlike the anonymous author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* who advises those on the apophatic path to, "Try to destroy all understanding and awareness of anything under God and read everything down deep under the cloud of forgetting . . . a sort of cloud of unknowing. . . ." Pastoral conversations

invite the ones receiving care into unspeakable moments when only love can make a connection, as the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing* says, "... when we try to draw close to God, only love can take the final step, drawing us into the dark yet dazzling mystery of God . . ." and as Teresa of Avila conveys in her reflection on Song of Songs 2:3, "It seems that while the soul is in this delight that was mentioned it feels itself totally engulfed and protected in this shadow and kind of cloud of Divinity."

An essential of pastoral diagnosis, then, from an apophatic approach would be how and if we *attend* to these unspeakable experiences. Do they occur in the pastoral conversation? Do they occur in the life of the one receiving care? Can we teach them to *attend* to these unspeakable moments in our conversations, or in the whole of their lives, and to notice the "shifts" in their lives that result, or the "revelation" that occurs out of the silence?

Which leads us to the most important diagnostic question—namely, does the *caregiver*, the pastoral practitioner, experience and *attend* to the unspeakable in his or her own life? Does the *caregiver* have a spiritual practice that allows for the "revelation" that comes out of silence? From an apophatic point of view, this would be the most crucial element in the formation of the pastoral identity, even more important than the intellectual ability to do theological reflection. In the language of Chris Schlauch, this would be the primary "root metaphor" that informs the "clinical attitude" of the caregiver. Schlauch (1993, 54) in suggesting a re-visioning of pastoral diagnosis says, "In this re-visioning pastoral diagnosis is an ongoing activity within a clinical perspective that is the expression of root metaphors, which are enacted in a clinical attitude and made operational in the diagnostic variables." Building upon the work of David Shapiro (1989), Heinz Kohut (1987), and Roy Schafer (1983), Schlauch reminds us that everything

Pastoral conversations have a respectful attitude of "not knowing" that attempts to set aside our pre-conceived ideas so that we might truly be present and listen.

that is done in a pastoral conversation is guided by the *caregiver's* attitude. The one receiving care is influenced by this attitude, and the attitude itself is learned from the caregiver. "As a tacit map it guides every feature of the clinician's activities. As a map that the client may (will) internalize, at least in part, it will come to influence many features of the client's activities" (59).

In the language of Michael Polanyi (1974, 1983) this is the "tacit dimension" in which knowledge is transmitted tacitly from one generation to another. What is passed on tacitly is that which has come to "indwell," or has been "interiorized," in the life of the teacher or, in this case, the pastoral caregiver. The teacher *attends from* this "indwelling" in any focused *attention* to the process. From an apophatic point of view, it is this internalized experience of the unknowable and unspeakable that the caregiver *attends from* which allows the caregiver to *attend to* these unspeakable experiences in the lives of the ones receiving care. In the language of a non-theistic tradition, it might be said like this:

"... From the standpoint of Zen, the experience is the essential content of Buddhism, and the verbal doctrine is quite secondary to the wordless transmission of the experience itself from generation to generation. ... Yet the actual content of the experience was never and could never be put into words. For words are the flames of *maya*, the meshes of its net, and the experience is of the water which slips through" (Watts, 1957, 54-55).

WISDOM IN A KATAPHATIC AND APOPHATIC INTERPLAY

Attending from the wordless, unknowable, unspeakable experience that is internalized through an ongoing contemplative practice in his or her life,

the pastoral caregiver can be present in any context of pastoral conversation and can use any form of spiritual assessment discerned with wisdom to *attend to* the "revelation" that will come out of silence in the process of pastoral care. In this way there is an interplay between the kataphatic and the apophatic ways of pastoral diagnosis that maintains a certain elusive quality of pastoral diagnosis, being beyond words and central to the process. With evolutionary advances in knowledge, political and social changes, and continuing research, the language of pastoral diagnosis may change, and the responsible pastoral caregiver will attend to this change, always attending with a wisdom that emerges out of silence.

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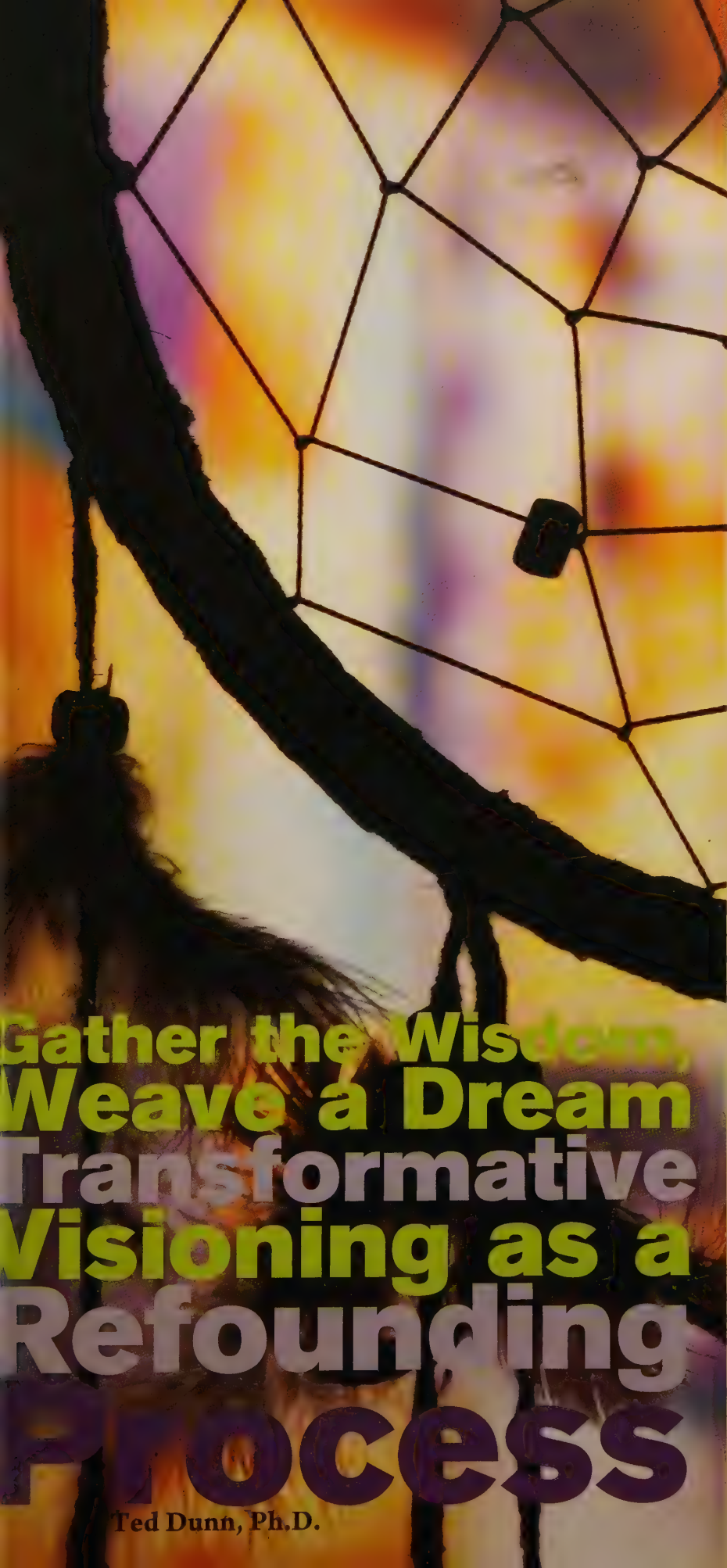
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Our truest life is when we are in our dreams awake

Henry David Thoreau

When a community has more memories than it does dreams, it is dying. In my work with religious communities I have had the privilege of hearing many stories of life in the good old days, nostalgic stories about days gone by in formation and the early years of life in community. As these stories are shared with laughter and tears, I often watch the faces of the novices and those newly professed and wonder to myself: What are the stories they will tell? Is there more of a past than there will ever be a future for this community?

The purpose of this article is to describe a type of journey that aims not merely to create powerful new visions, but to transform the heart and soul of communities by the very processes used. Such processes are not for every community. These processes are integrally connected to, and best suited for, communities on a journey of re-founding, transformation or revitalization. The processes I will describe are intended to bring about deep and radical change. Previously, in an article entitled, *Refounding Religious Life: A Choice for Transformation Change* (HUMAN DEVELOPMENT Fall 2009), I outlined five key elements to such re-founding efforts intended to birth a new cycle of life. These are:

1. Prophetic vision: the aspiration of re-founding
2. Transformation of consciousness: seeing through new lenses
3. Re-appropriation of your charism: authenticating your inner voice
4. Conversion and reconciliation: the crucible of re-founding
5. Experimentation and learning: evolution in action

Gather the Wisdom, Weave a Dream Transformative Visioning as a Refounding Process

Ted Dunn, Ph.D.

What I would like to focus upon here is the element of visioning. While a prophetic vision is the ideal outcome, it is the process that this article intends to describe. If your community is at a crossroads of life and death and is courageous enough to go all-in on a future that transcends the past, then perhaps transformative visioning may provide you with a viable means for birthing new life.

WHAT IS TRANSFORMATIVE VISIONING?

Transformative visioning is, in essence, a communal faith journey. While the end goal may be a prophetic vision, the power of this journey lies more in how you walk it than in the vision claimed. It is a journey that will test your readiness to live authentically out of your deepest beliefs. It will cause you to leave behind all that has become misaligned and bereft of meaning, all that is made more of nostalgia than of your call to further the reign of God. It is a journey that seeks to transform the very culture of community through holy and intimate conversations, loving and reconciling exchanges and communal discernment of God's call. It is less about the future that awaits you than the sort of people you are, who you are growing to become and the very purpose you claim for your existence.

With that as an introduction, let's start with a basic description and then add to our understanding as we explore further: Transformative visioning is a multi-phase process of envisioning a future distinct from your past. It is a means for re-discovering, re-vitalizing, co-creating and transforming the culture of community. It involves spiritual, intellectual, emotional, behavioral and existential processes. It is not about forecasting the future, eliminating risk, creating vision statements or engaging in conventional strategic planning.

The primary reason for engaging in transformative visioning is to gather the wisdom and weave a dream powerful enough to awaken a community's soul. It is a journey intended to bring forth deep and radical change enabling new life to emerge. Such processes are part and parcel of refounding religious life, the part that invites you to create, articulate and activate a prophetic vision for the future.

LESSONS FROM CONVENTIONAL PROCESSES: POTENTIAL PITFALLS

A sad and cautionary truth about conventional visioning processes is that most fail to produce the intended results. In fact, a review of the literature by Henry Mintzberg suggests that upwards of 80 percent fail! The good news is that the reasons for such failures are well documented. And while we are not focusing upon these conventional approaches, the lessons learned are worth studying because transformative visioning will, at the very least, demand that we stay clear of these pitfalls.

While there are a host of potential missteps, I would like to give honorable mention to five of the most common problems with conventional approaches. Allow these to serve as red flags, cautionary benchmarks for assessing your own efforts along the way.

1. Less Than an All-out Effort

Visions that wither and die are often ones that were never given a full measure of life from the beginning. They were not infused with a sense of urgency, a forceful call or a compelling set of reasons that would oblige an all-out effort. Too often the "real work" of community takes precedence. Keeping the community going on a daily basis, maintaining the lives and wellbeing of its members, keeping ministry and family obligations are all part of the ordinary press of life. The work that has to be done while visioning seems extraneous. What communities fail to realize is that efforts to transform themselves, if seriously pursued, must become the real work of community. If your visioning effort is less than an all-out effort, if it is not the real work of the community, then it will neither transform your lives nor will live up to its name as prophetic.

2. Insufficient Depth

Even if a visioning process begins in earnest with stirring calls to push out into the deep, rarely do communities stray far from the shore. Pledges to have soul-searching conversations, though sincere at the time, are continually confronted by the natural resistance to what promises to become tension-filled conversations. Fear of conflict, lack of trust, limited skills and a backlog of prior unsuccessful efforts bring members and leaders alike to look for a way out: We don't have the time. It will cost too much. We're too old to change. We need more study. There is never a dearth of reasons (rationalizations) for staying ashore. If your urges to stay ashore are not successfully challenged and worked through, there will be no depth to the process and your efforts will fail to transform.

3. Limited Ownership

If there is no ownership by the members for whatever vision is claimed, it will never get off the ground. In order to create and carry out a transformative vision, members must believe in it and be asked to sacrifice to see it through. Only owners feel this kind of responsibility and are willing to make such sacrifices. And to become owners, members must be involved in every step of the process, have an experience where both planners and leaders listen to what they say, and know that their voice matters in shaping the process and the vision. They must have real (not pseudo) choices along the way and real power to say yes or no to these.

Too often attempts are made by leaders to sell the vision by persuading members why they ought to buy in. Members know when they are being sold something that they were not a part of creating. These measures don't create genuine ownership and, consequently, any vision that follows will be quickly orphaned.

4. Working Around Resistance

Forces of change inevitably evoke forces of resistance resulting in conflict. Despite this well-known change/resistance dynamic, leaders and members continue to collude in a dance of avoidance. They see resistance as “out there,” in others who voice disappointment and anger. Rarely do they recognize their own collusion in this dance, let alone thank those who speak their unspoken resistance, giving them the appearance of cooperation and propriety.

Failure is inevitable when, instead of dealing directly with voices of resistance, strategies are formed to minimize, work around and diminish the power of resisters (e.g., discrediting their integrity by labeling them oppositional or crazy; appeasing their anger by agreeing to disagree, containing their airtime with processes that keep things moving in the name of accomplishing a task). These tactics not only limit the other's persuasive strength, but also sap the strength out of any vision claimed in this way.

5. Glorification of the Past

This is a tough one for a church steeped in ritual and tradition. Yet visioning processes that invite deep rather than incremental change are ones that require more time spent looking forward than looking in the rearview mirror. However, processes that pit a loyalty to the past against a fidelity to the future are doomed. What are needed are integrative, both/and visions that have a bias toward the future.

If honoring the past means behaving strictly in accord with yesterday's interpretations of canon law, the constitutions or the words of your founder, and disallowing any new interpretations or changes, then prophetic visions are pre-empted. Yes, the past must be honored, understood and appreciated and, simultaneously, it must be re-incorporated into a new vision and understood in a new way. This newness carries with it a necessary departure from the past in such a way that transformation can occur. Transformative visioning processes require that any future claimed is one that transcends the past, not severs it. There must be a dying of old ways for revitalization to occur and for a future to be born—the way of the Paschal Mystery.

PRINCIPLES OF TRANSFORMATIVE VISIONING

In contrast to conventional visioning processes, a transformative visioning process requires an entirely different kind of mindset and approach to planning and implementation. It places a premium on face-to-face dialogue and in-depth conversations over breadth of coverage and written reports. It values the cognitive skills of intuition, imagination and poetry at least as much as logic, reason and prose. It values substantial partnership between leaders and members who together orbit

around a developing vision. Let me describe more fully just a few of the more salient principles in order to help explicate the distinctions.

1. Destiny over Destination

Visioning processes of all kinds seek to create new visions. But the primary purpose for engaging in transformative visioning processes is not simply to arrive at the destination with a new vision statement. Rather it is to embrace the journey itself as the pathway to embracing your destiny, your primary purpose for existing. It is not that the end goal of claiming a new vision is irrelevant, but it is secondary to the deeper reason for engaging in such processes. The deeper reason for engaging in a transformative visioning process is to respond to God's call to discover anew your destiny.

Parker Palmer frames it best when he asks, “Who are you meant to become?” In his book, *Let Your Life Speak*, he suggests that our life's journey is an ever-unfolding one. In discerning our next best step it is, therefore, wise to listen to what our life has to say and that our journey can thus far reveal. What can your life tell you about who you are growing to become?

I would add that who we are in the present always holds the tensions between who we have been and who we are growing to become. Reflecting upon this tension, this betwixt and between state of becoming, can help us appreciate our deepest yearnings. It invites us to address what is yet to be reconciled between past and future and who God is calling us to become. These are the kind of deeper questions asked over and over again in different ways throughout the journey of transformation.

2. Care of the Whole

Much has been written in recent decades about the developmental shift within religious life from highly dependent to highly independent relationships that individuals have had to make relative to community and church hierarchy. The more recent shift from independence to interdependence has highlighted a need to care for the good of the whole and the individual. In other words the identity and well-being of both the community and the individual are important and interconnected. Hence, a great deal of work is being done to foster values such as mutual accountability, shared wisdom and partnership between leaders and members. New paradigms are continually being proffered to support this movement, for example: Sandra Schneiders' idea of reframing spirituality and the vows, my idea of shifting from hierarchical to circular models of governance and Peter Block's idea of creating structures of belonging.

The transformative visioning processes I am describing here are ones that invite and promote this kind of continued growth toward interdependence. The values of

interdependence are integrally woven into the processes. This challenges the more conventional visioning processes, which are heavily skewed toward dependency (e.g., leadership creates and sells the vision) or those skewed toward independence (e.g., personal transformation done in parallel fashion rather than together as a community). Transformative visioning processes encourage both freedom of individual choice along with invitations to care for the whole as a both-and principle of accountability.

3. The Vision Is Already in Us

Reiner Rilke once said, "The future enters into us, in order to transform itself in us, long before it happens." Transformative visions are not made from the advice of others, deduced from theory or acquired from yesterday's dogma (i.e., the realm of more conventional visioning approaches). Rather, they are homespun dreams realized only through a process of discovering the wisdom that lies within each member, beneath the floorboards of the known and familiar. Such visions are conceived from within the womb of a community seeking to discover its own destiny and co-created by leaders and members alike.

While the future of religious life may be "unpictureable," as Patricia Wittberg suggests, it nonetheless exists in trace amounts. There are intimations of a future that currently exists along the edges, manifested by outliers of community who dance to the beat of different drummers. Other fragments are seen by the many prophetic authors of our time, who again and again offer new images of what lies beyond the horizon. Most prevalently, however, are the seeds of a future that lie within each member's dream of what could be if only they had the invitation, support and the courage to risk birthing its potential. Creation fervently awaits our participation in co-creating the next version of the future; one better than the last, but one still leaving space for generations to come. Transformative visioning processes invite you to weave the strands of a future already in you into the next best step in the ongoing journey of religious life.

4. Appreciating Paradox

Engaging in a transformative visioning process requires an appreciation of paradox. For example, leaders and members will need to embrace ambivalence, ambiguity and anxiety as part of our human condition. These emotions will be constant companions throughout the betwixt and between phases of transformation and in your efforts to picture the unpictureable. Allow yourself to become clearly confused as part of the process and view this confusion as a harbinger for change, rather than a problem. Confusion simply means that you are trying to understand things in a new way. It will be important to become more at ease and adept at being peacefully in conflict. Working with tension and conflict is part of the

creative process, part of the necessary chaos and what it means to honor diversity.

Orderly chaos is the name of the game. Making chaos out of your ordered ways and making order out of the chaos that ensues will be an ongoing effort. A transformative process is a perfectly flawed one at best. You will need to make mistakes as a part of the process and get better at being fascinated by these; learning from these in order to grow. Being persistently flexible in planning is likewise important. Doing your best at planning, setting goals and holding your feet to the fire will be just as important as adjusting to changing circumstances and emergent insights. Planners of transformative processes do not pretend to have the roadmap clearly laid out in advance of the journey nor do they insist upon following a plan when new circumstances and wisdom dictate otherwise.

ORIGINS OF TRANSFORMATIVE VISIONING

Most communities continue to use conventional visioning and strategic planning processes, although, as we have learned, the research reviewing these methods has not been particularly glowing. In recent decades a number of creative alternatives have been offered that emphasize the types of principles related to transformative visioning as described here. Appreciative Inquiry, World Café, Scenario Writing, U-Theory, Open Space Technology are among the more well known. All of these approaches have merit and deserve our attention. In searching for methods specifically geared toward transformation, there is a wealth of literature worth considering.

In reviewing this literature and reflecting upon my own personal and professional experiences, it is evident that visions which transform us are the result of five basic dynamic movements: awakening, grounding, dreaming, discerning and realizing. I invite you to test the validity of these against your own experiences of transformation. While different authors refer to these dynamics using different language and emphasis, all five exist as necessary movements for genuine transformation to occur and for new visions and new life to emerge.

These dynamics, roughly outlined here in sequential fashion, typically overlap in practice and unfold in spiraling, ever-deepening fashion. While the details of these will largely be determined as the process unfolds, the outline that follows will give you an idea of what these movements might entail. It provides a starting point for planning, though the road map will surely change once the journey begins.

1. Awakening

It is now or never! For a new vision to mobilize an entire community, the case for deep change must carry more weight than the incentives for leaving things as they are. Members

eed to know that going on as is or making only incremental changes, while appearing safer, is a road that leads to certain death. To get off of the path of least resistance, to penetrate any urges toward denial or complacency, members must know unequivocally that time is up. A profound sense of urgency must be conveyed with hard truths that insist that life cannot go on like this any longer. Transförmational visions begin with an acute understanding of these painful realities and all-out assault on a status quo.

Yet to engage in deep and radical change there must be more than pain that motivates. To turn a phrase, there must also be audacious hope for a future. To awaken a community's soul, there must be intimations of a future with purpose beyond mere survival, one that speaks to the very essence of a community's existence. Souls will awaken to audacious visions, not wishful thinking or plain vanilla plans. Transformative visions are bold, yet doable with nothing less than an all-out effort. When we are inspired by visions that ask us to be a part of something larger than our own self, our courage, call to service and willingness to sacrifice are also roused. Thus, while pain may provide the initial spark, it is only in calling forth our noblest ambitions that we ignite a more lasting fire in our belly.

2. Grounding

What types of wisdom must be gathered in order to create, transform and birth a new vision? In this age of information, where the Internet places at our fingertips the collective knowledge of our planet, what key words do we type into the search box in order to become well informed? The three main content areas for exploration are: culture, context and dreams. These will be our key words in our initial search for wisdom.

The culture of a community consists of identity and core ideology. The focus here would include such issues as charism and mission, core values and beliefs, attitudes and normative behaviors as well as strengths and liabilities. The context in which a community is situated consists of the world, the church and the community's neighbors. The explorations here might include trends and events that seem to have an impact on the community as well as areas of challenge and opportunity. The dreams are endless and consist of the members' dreams for a hope-filled future.

These three elements (culture, context and dreams) make up the primary content in which to search for wisdom as well as the primary focus of transformation. You may have noticed that the raw material of transformative visioning processes is not substantially different from that of conventional visioning approaches. The primary difference is not so much in the content, but in the process that is used.

Visions that transform us are not dependent upon what new information is collected but on what new meanings might emerge. New meanings emerge as a result of new methods

used for gathering, new lenses used for understanding and the new emotions and insights that are evoked from dialogue and contemplation. It is more about dwelling in the questions than finding right answers. It is about depth conversation, rather than breadth of coverage. In other words, this is *less about fact-finding than it is about meaning-making*.

You can't download the same information, using the same old software and expect to come up with novel solutions. New software or ways of processing new information will be critical for two reasons: It disrupts the normative ways of gathering that frames and supports our usual way of seeing things; and second, it brings forth new energy and fresh ideas. A simple way of disrupting the same-old, same-old is trying out new methods of gathering and cross-fertilizing conversations. If, for example, members-only gatherings have been the norm, perhaps bringing in outsiders (i.e., partners in mission) would add a new dynamic.

Alas, wisdom is not really found by Googling. Wisdom is forged from experience unearthed in a context of intimate conversations with God and one another. For intimacy to exist, there must be safety and trust. For this to happen in community your skills will be tested. Giving and receiving feedback that is direct, honest and respectful, engaging in loving confrontation, offering empathy and listening intuitively are all skills needed to gather wisdom. If you can dialogue skillfully while remaining present to one another and to God, you will not only unearth new wisdom, but you'll find the courage needed to act upon this wisdom and transform your lives anew.

3. Dreaming

When you have been awakened and enlivened, when sufficient wisdom is gathered, you'll need to engage in a process of opening up possibilities. Anchored in a new understanding of your world and community, in light of a new understanding of your identity and culture, you will be invited to dream big! Everyone will need an invitation to weave a dream of a hope-filled future.

What kinds of dreams might you want to share? Well, what would you want to do for the love of it? What would make you want to get out of bed early and get out the door today? Who would you love to become that would not only bring you new life, but bring a smile to God's face as well? These are the kinds of questions you might be exploring. Such passion is needed for transformation to occur and you will need to explore different methods of rekindling this flame.

Visions that transform are based in hope, not "have to's." While suffering and challenging circumstances may require us to change, we are only transformed by freely responding to God's call to choose life. It is for the love of God that we dig deep and claim hope once again. Why else would we choose to go through the agony in the garden, let go of the past and set

out into the deep? When we can imagine a future full of hope and possibilities for new life, something that beckons us to risk again, try again and choose life again, somehow letting go becomes more possible.

Doing a lot of dreaming can become kind of, well, dreamy. It might be fun for a while, but sooner or later somebody is going to want to get out of the clouds and get real. Having worked so hard at getting out of the box, it is time to try to make sense of what these dreams could actually become.

Transposing dreams into viable visions requires some challenging conversations. Who is to say what makes for a viable vision? Setting criteria together and ahead of time will prevent arbitrary, leadership-driven or committee-approved approaches to its development. Without community-owned criteria the critics will resist and rightfully complain. Eventually, you will need to settle on what constitutes a viable vision. Here are some sample criteria:

1. Will it forward your mission?
2. Will it make God smile?
3. Does it fit with reality?
4. Does it stir the embers of hope and passion?
5. Is it doable with an all-out effort?

As viable visions begin to emerge, these will need further study and development. You'll need to put meat on the bones and create a data-rich composite picture of what these can look like. One way to do this (and there are many) is through scenario writing. Basically, what this means is that a group of members in love with a possible vision would write a scenario of what this vision could look like if chosen by the community. Who would be doing what? Whom would it serve? What would it require of you? While being developed, these kinds of questions would need to be continually tested against the criteria your community set for viable visions.

4. Discerning

Once your dreams are shaped into viable visions you will need to evaluate and further mold these into the best possible options from which to ultimately choose. It will be important then to discern which of these best reflect the pathway you believe God is calling you to pursue. While leadership or a committee could do this on behalf of the community, it is far more beneficial if this discernment is done as an entire community.

Though many religious have been schooled in personal discernment, it remains a growing edge for most to engage in this kind of communal discernment. Yet communal discernment is uniquely suited as the method of decision-making for transformative visioning because:

1. In the communal effort to discover God's intentions, the collective resolve to carry out the chosen decision will be deepened.

2. "Holy indifference" (discussed below) intensifies and deepens the transformation process as my will, our will and God's will are knitted together.
3. The gifts of communal discernment will further inform and add a new dimension to the visioning efforts.

The collective journey to discover what God intends is among the most intimate and powerful spiritual journeys any community can take. This power helps to transform the minds and hearts of members and, in turn, the vision. Furthermore, it coheres their collective resolve to carry it out. In discernment you will be sorting, shaping, letting go and prioritizing visions all the while interlacing your heart-felt desires with those of God. Members will put their blood, sweat and tears into these efforts and this kind of sweat-equity engenders tremendous ownership. This investment is exactly what is needed in order to forge the commitment required to realize a vision once chosen.

Yet, it is this very investment that confronts members with the greatest paradox of discernment—holy indifference. This great paradox of discernment is an effort to become *deeply rooted, while holding all things lightly*. Members will be asked to become invested in something and simultaneously to hold the outcome lightly. The indifference here is not a matter of self-denial or not caring. To the contrary, it is about caring deeply about pleasing God and giving life to your own passions. And it is about holding all this lightly as it is woven and surrendered into the larger tapestry of truth and love.

When placed in the context of communal discernment, this paradox of holy indifference becomes three-dimensional, an intricate weaving together of my will, our will and God's will. For those who accept the challenge and use communal discernment the gifts can be profound. In communal discernment the gifts of wisdom are bountiful, relationships can be deepened by intimate exchanges and newfound understandings. Both the vision and the community shaping it can be transformed by the journey. The truth that emerges from such intimate dialogues can set a community free and on fire. These are a few of the many gifts of communal discernment that can help transform a community.

5. Realizing

Dreams remain only dreams until and unless they are put into action. And these actions do not simply happen at the very end of the journey once the dreams are articulated as viable visions. These actions take place throughout the process. In a sense, a transformative visioning process relies more upon *acting your way into a new way of thinking*, than it does on the conventional approach of thinking your way into a new way of acting. This does not mean you will act without thinking. It simply means that sometimes we need to try something and this, in turn, leads to new insight. It can get us unstuck when we are procrastinating for fear of making a mistake or can't agree on what to do next.

For example, a community once grappled with developing mission guidelines for their newly developed lay-administered board. After months of studying core documents, debating the issues and rewriting mission statements, the fourth draft brought no more agreement or enthusiasm than the first. Each maintained their belief about what mission was and how to use their money based upon their reading of their founding documents and past missions statements. They were stuck.

In an effort to break through the impasse each member was given a sum of money to spend on mission according to personal predilections. Two months later they gathered and shared what they had done with the money in the name of mission. They shared how what they did had affected them and the learnings they gleaned. The power of their experience was enough to infuse new passion and insight into their efforts resulting in a document that came to life. Their actions had led them to a new way of thinking.

Patricia Wittberg has been among the most prolific authors writing on the future of religious life. In her book entitled, *Pathways to Re-Creating Religious Communities*, she chronicles the efforts of communities attempting to break the cycle of decline and find a refounding pathway. In the end she draws few conclusions, but one conclusion she states rather emphatically is that religious communities must "do something!" They must do something other than study, debate and plan. They must act before it's too late.

Experimentation is a necessary part of refounding and a vital ingredient of transformative visioning. It is a word, however, that many dislike, especially those who believe that experimenting is what has led communities "astray" since Vatican II. For some members, experimenting conjures up a fear that you might be recklessly disregarding the edicts handed down by tradition, church documents or your own constitutions. It may even seem to some like breaking the law and disobeying church hierarchy.

If those who believe that there is only one right way to forge a future remain unwilling to engage in a dialogue of mutual influence, then experimenting will be rendered impossible. New wisdom, integrative understandings and prophetic visions cannot be born from unyielding minds and hearts holding fast to one-dimensional loyalties. If genuine experimentation and mutual dialogue are intolerable, then transformation will be blocked every step of the way and any embryonic visions that might have been conceived will be aborted. The challenge is to carry the tensions inherent in these differing loyalties without succumbing to either/or answers; rather, to stay in the struggle long enough to discover wisdom that transcends and integrates.

Beyond all of the experimenting, as you grow further into what emerges as your prophetic vision, you will need to create a comprehensive pastoral plan. Such a plan would provide the framework for activating your vision. It would include measurable goals and objectives, time lines, budgets, lines of authority, etc. Though all of these will be planned, it ought to remain work in progress, subject to evaluation and subsequent modification. Your experience of acting, evaluating, learning and growing will be an ongoing dance that continues well into the future.

CONCLUSION

Will there be more of a past than there will ever be a future for your community? I believe that opportunities abound for religious life to emerge anew and that intimations of this already exist. The great challenge is to listen to who God is calling you to become and to embrace the kind of uncertainty and risk from which most of us normally retreat. Such a journey challenges communities to live the very bedrock of our Catholic faith, to live into the paschal mystery, communally discern God's call and actualize the gospel in today's world. Such challenges can be met, however, if communities gather strength from being-in-it-together, believe in their abundant wisdom, draw upon their passion for mission and count on God as their ever-present guide and source of new life.

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WHEN FEELINGS FAIL US

James Torrens, S.J.

Charles Dickens was a man of feeling, intensely so. This was the source of his literary triumph as well as his personal undoing. His life and work are a cautionary tale. It is recorded abundantly in a fine new biography, *Charles Dickens*, by Michael Slater (Yale University Press).

As a very young reader, Dickens let his imagination be invaded by the great novels of the 18th century, *Tom Jones*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, and by travel writing, such as Laurence Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*. The English novel, coming to birth in the Age of Reason, leaned rather on "sensibility," i.e., responsiveness to what afflicts others. The Novel of Sentiment became more or less normative; it called for "adherence to strict morality and honour, combined with sympathy and feeling" (*The Concise Oxford Companion to English Literature*). Tear-jerking flourished and happy endings were expected. *The Man of Feeling*, a novel by Henry Mackenzie, 1771, sums up the genre.

Charles Dickens was that Man of Feeling, writ large. He was everything writ large—exuberance, inventiveness of games and songs and skits, the gimlet eye that lets nothing escape notice, a tireless energy. After a busy day in

London or elsewhere, Dickens would often go out for a walk, a walk of ten or twelve miles! For most of his writing life he was editor of a monthly or weekly journal, in which he published his novels by installment, but where he also discussed everything going on in England. He responded to numerous submissions and edited everything closely. His way of recuperating from the long labor of a novel was to launch a new theater production, with himself in the major role, as well as director, stage manager, publicist, etc.

All readers of Dickens are enraptured by what Thackeray called "those inimitable Dickens touches which make such a great man of him" (291). In his novels, as G. K. Chesterton noted, we vividly remember anyone who has even the briefest walk-on part. Dickens was aware of this power of his and early took as his nickname "The Inimitable."

The novels of Charles Dickens are steeped in fellow feeling. His first two books, *Sketches by Boz* and *Pickwick Papers*, were comic successes but he aimed at more, as Slater tells us. "He wanted to make the world a better place, to champion the poor and oppressed, to 'instruct' readers in social justice matter, [as well as] to shame the cruel and canting" (93). He wrote

with "generous and earnest feeling," especially about the death of children, such as Paul Dombey (of *Dombey and Son*) and Little Nell (of *The Old Curiosity Shop*).

Dickens was forever speaking at benefits for some particular charity, or organizing purses for writers down on their luck. And in his stream of magazine pieces, as well as when plotting his novels, he went on the attack continually against the British state for its criminal neglect of poor children (*Oliver Twist*), its lax supervision of schools (*Nicholas Nickleby*), its neglect of sanitary conditions (*Bleak House*); and he pushed for decent housing and prison reform. For *Little Dorrit* he invented the Circumlocutions Office, a brilliant send-up of British bureaucracy. Dickens took scandal at what he saw as the unconcern of the Anglican Church about social well-being, while they hotly debated the Oxford Movement. So he went over to the Unitarians.

The ready compassion of Charles Dickens stemmed from his own year of deprivation as a boy of twelve sent out to work at a blacking factory, and put to boarding with a grim lady, a friend of his improvident parents. This indignity, which gave sudden pause to his education, left him feeling aggrieved all of his



fe. His parents had brought the boy up to feel middle-class, gentlemanly, and where he was, one of the urban poor. What he observed wandering the streets of London proved invaluable to him as a writer, but the cost came very high. The habit of feeling sorry for himself as life went on, despite all his accomplishment, blocked the road to maturity.

This childhood trauma, recorded fictionally in *David Copperfield*, did open up the sensibility of Dickens to the common lot of his readers. It preoccupied him with the bond of fellowship to be formed with them. Were they moved to tears by the death of little Paul Dombey? He let them know he had shared fully in their sorrow. In short, he became tremendously dependent upon his readers, not just for subscriptions and high sales but for the enthusiasm he relished and which fed him.

This surrender to feelings, this weakness of personal insight, led Dickens badly astray in matters of the heart. At age eighteen, he fell headlong in love with young Maria Beadnell, whom Slater describes as "a pretty banker's daughter, petite and vacuous" (33). Adolescent imagining no doubt added intensity to this absorbing emotion. He kept urging his

case with Maria for two years, and she kept teasing and fending him off. He never really recovered from her "display of heartless indifference" or from his infatuation.

Three years later, Dickens married Catherine Hogarth. Catherine's younger sister Mary was a frequent visitor and guest with them. Dickens centered his admiration upon this winning 16-year-old. Hardly a year had gone by, however, when, returning from the theater with them one night, Mary collapsed and the very next day died in Dickens's arms. It was a blow to devastate the author. On his emotions it left a wound that never healed, an emptiness as of a soul-mate vanished. In *David Copperfield*, a dozen or so years later, Dickens produced fictional versions of these two women, Maria and Mary, in Dora, David's "child wife," and the faultless Agnes Whitfield.

Catherine Hogarth bore Charles Dickens ten children. For most of their twenty years together, his treatment of her was considerate and affectionate. She was certainly his able companion and confidante in public and private, amidst continual household moves. Yet eventually Dickens began writing to his alter-ego, John Forster, about the drawbacks of his present marital life and his ever-growing restlessness and

"disappointment of heart" (375). The end of the marriage was hastened and embittered by his harsh treatment of the durable and enduring Catherine, whom he went so far as to slander as the Bad Mother. By this time he had taken on a young actress, Nelly Ternan, as his protégée (at least that), and he devoted himself thereafter to the upkeep of her mother, her sister and herself.

Some of Dickens's children, as well as his biographers, claimed that he had never really loved Catherine. This may well be harsh. Still he never did sort out the muddle of his feelings. He kept ultra-busy in the final decade of his life with tours for public readings in the British Isles, America and France. The people loved him, the income was good. But Dickens needed their exultant reception for reasons deeper than the money. Despite his unsettled state, in those days he wrote perhaps his finest novel, *Great Expectations*. It features a poor young country boy who is played upon by a mad benefactress, Miss Havisham, who entices him to fall in love with her young ward Estella. Miss Havisham's purpose is to break his heart over this unattainable love, a purpose she pretty much accomplishes. Dickens had determined on one of those sadder-but-wiser endings; at the



last moment, though, he yielded to a colleague (Edward Bulwer-Lytton) who was urging him to sweeten it.

Why this long discourse upon the Man of Feeling par excellence? Because the story of Charles Dickens, Victorian Genius, illuminates the very positive and the very negative effects that can come from acute sensibility, sensitive feeling, wealth of sympathy, aroused compassion. Maturity, insight into oneself, self-extending love all call for a big step beyond experience of strong feeling. In the case of Charles Dickens, the sense of personal injury and the inability to separate infatuation from real love left him and those about him deeply scarred. This does not diminish the brilliant artistry that made such extraordinary stories out of his traumatic episodes, and it in no way eclipses his lifelong battle for social reform and against upper-class entitlement in England.

Charles Dickens, The Inimitable, admitted to Dostoevsky, when the two met in his London office, that he seemed to consist of two selves, warring. He saw clearly that integration had eluded him. The tangle of this particular life shows us how little we can rely, ultimately, on

feelings as guides. They cannot be left without reflection, monitoring, challenge. We cannot do without strong feelings, compassion in particular, such energy do they give to our days. But we depend mightily on second thoughts, on insight, often enough to save us from them.



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FEELING IMPORTANT

Charles Dickens summed up the New Testament as "the blessed history, in which 'the blind, lame, palsied beggar, the criminal, the woman stained with blood, the drunken or all our dirty dog, the weak & the foolish' 'portion that no human pride, indifference, or sophistry . . . can take away.'"

- *Dombey and Son*

Squeezer, siphoner of taxes
no more. You, Matthew,
relieved at the call to leave that,

threw your last grandest party,
ushering outsiders in
around the Master Teacher.

Anxious to learn their names,
heartening with a look,
he apportioned them esteem.

The insiders, self-important,
aloof from the table
and viewing the Teacher dimly,
were by his eye found out.

"I'M FINE! FINE! FINE!"

Dealing with Maladaptive Denial

Suzanne Meyer, I.H.M.



The woman who sat before me, hunched in her chair with her hand supporting her chin to keep her head from drooping, looked to be at least in her late seventies. I knew from talking to some of the Sisters with whom she lived that she was two decades younger. I had come for a consultation at the request of this Sister's local community whose members were seriously concerned, not only with the marked deterioration they observed in her, but in what they described as her "constant refusal to admit that anything is wrong."

The Sister who called to ask me to come to their convent described Sister as a person who had managed a chronic illness for many years and who up to the last several years had managed "fairly well around her limitations." She noted that in the past year the members of the community had become "very worried" about what she described as ever worsening symptoms incurring ever more real limitations in what she could manage, yet, a constant insistence that she was "as good as ever."

In her description of problems, Sister noted that the constant retort to anyone's inquiry about her health or welfare was, "I'm fine! Fine! Fine! And, how are you doing?" From the narrative, I could hear a number of emotions reflected in Sister's words, ranging from care and concern to frustration and even anger. "We just don't know what to do to help Sister, and at this point, we don't know what to do to support ourselves in dealing with Sister. It is a bad situation that is becoming worse by the day."

After an hour talking with Sister myself, much of what she said and did not say verified the caller's concerns and report. It was obvious looking at Sister that her illness had reached a point at which what once may have been supportable disabling had become major debilitation. My observation noted that walking,

In its simplest form, denial means that when a person is faced with a fact that is too uncomfortable to accept he or she rejects it instead, insisting that it is not true despite what realities he or she may have to eliminate or ignore in order to protect against facing them.

moving, even sitting in an upright position for any length of time was very difficult for her. We had walked down a corridor together, a distance of some thirty feet, and when she reached the small parlor for our meeting, she was breathing hard and had to rest several minutes before she could speak. In the course of our conversation, she lost track of what we had been saying several times and changed points in her narrative repeatedly. She recounted three different versions of the event that had precipitated her most recent hospitalization, with time, place and conditions remarkably altered. When I raised what I heard as contradictions, Sister became at first confused and then highly defensive. She insisted that she could return to work, (a job in a hospital that entailed considerable walking and required clear cognitive focus), that she should be allowed to drive (a prohibition put on her by her fellow Sisters after they discovered her inability to park the car in the convent lot), and that she "be left alone to handle" her own medical appointments (a responsibility overseen by one of the Sisters after she had missed several).

Sister is not the first individual I have seen who has exhibited these and similar symptoms, although she is perhaps the most extreme case I have engaged still living at a house for those in active ministry. She had, quite consistent with her symptoms, refused to enter, even for a time, the congregation's infirmary. Why would she? She was "Fine! Fine! Fine!" What Sister was, in fact, was deep in the state of denial.

WHAT IS DENIAL?

Denial, which lacks a clear conceptual definition, is typically categorized as one of the primitive or primary defense mechanisms, rooted in the early world of the infant, in a time of preverbal, prelogical and magical thinking. First construed by Anna Freud as a normal archaic process in the initial

developmental stages of the child, she also noted that "the mature ego does not continue to make extensive use of denial because it conflicts with the capacity to recognize and test reality" (*Columbia Encyclopedia*, 2009, p. 1). The operational word here is "extensive." Most persons can and do employ some form of denial at stressful, even catastrophic times in their lives, especially in life-threatening situations. In these occasions, the defense can function as "necessary for the preservation of well-being . . . as a protection from stressors that are too overwhelming . . . to buy time to mobilize the resources needed to cope . . . to safeguard important relationships . . . too fragile to withstand the truth" (Stephenson, 2003, p. 985). The defense of denial in these cases is often observed at the beginning of the crisis (as in Elisabeth Kubler-Ross's stages) or at the end of a terminal struggle.

In its simplest form, denial means that when a person is faced with a fact that is too uncomfortable to accept he or she rejects it instead, insisting that it is not true despite what realities he or she may have to eliminate or ignore in order to protect against facing them. Operating in a largely unconscious way, there really is no "simple" form of denial with its many manifestations ranging from minimizing to what borders on manic states. In terms of physical illness, much research, reactivity, response and recognition has occurred over the past couple decades as to the protective, and perhaps even life-sustaining, effects of some forms of denial. Warning that the role of the physician faced with patient denial is to avoid "collision with it," Zhang (2002) notes that outcome research on the use of denial, especially with persons with terminal cancer, "has produced mixed results" (p. 2). She concludes that while "some empirical studies suggest denial may serve a useful purpose early on, it may become maladaptive if sustained over prolonged periods of time" (p. 2). Rabinowitz and

Peirson (2006) give some markers to the state of denial that would qualify it as maladaptive. They include when it interferes with one or more necessary "actions" in dealing with the illness . . . decreasing the chance of accepting intervention that might lead to remission, cure or longer life" as well as engaging in behaviors that put the person or others at risk when performed (p. 71). Stephenson (2004) cautions that families and friends may be not only victims of denial but even perpetrators of it when they either accept unquestioningly the refrains of "Fine," or when their own need to protect against the worst case" fosters denial in the one suffering.

The state of the Sister whose profile opened this article is one of maladaptive denial. What makes it such and how individuals faced with dealing with different degrees of it compose the remainder of this discussion.

COMPONENTS OF MALADAPTIVE DENIAL

In working with those dealing with maladaptive denial, understanding components of it can be helpful. Operationally defining it has become an ongoing process. Coming mainly out of the work of in-patient facilities and the psychiatrists and other health workers who encounter severe stages of the defense operating among their patients, work toward a operational definition has been slow in coming. Most persistently seen on hospital wards as a complete denial of illness and refusal of

all treatment, researchers have proposed and pushed for (without much apparent success) some form of inclusion of this in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Handbook of Mental Illness* as early as 1990 (Stearns, Spitzer & Muskin), again in 1998 (Muskin, Feldhammer, Gelfand & Strauss) toward the DSM-IV-TR edition, and as recently as 2007 for the DSM-V publication (Fava, Fabri, Sirri & Wise).

In a significantly hands-on view of it as an oncology nurse would have, Pamela Stephenson (2004) suggests regarding denial not as a fixed diagnosis or event, but "a dynamic with fluid qualities that fluctuate with experience and time" (p. 986). As such, the Sister in the profile is behaving neither well or badly, making choices neither appropriately nor inappropriately in terms of her illness, but doing what her innermost and, yes, in many ways infantile, self is demanding for what she deep down feels is her survival. Like a trapped animal, lashing out with claws, or perhaps, more compassionately, a terrified child who feels abandoned and alone, she is, even in a distorted way, doing what she needs to do to preserve what is core to herself.

Several key facts emerge when a person can regard the *process* of denial (not diagnosis of it) as fluid and protective. The first is that the person, whether in a certifiable state of delusion or befuddled state of distortion, can move to other less self-destructive emotional places. But, since the defense is largely unconscious, it requires outside help. If Sister is defending

Families and friends may be not only victims of denial but even perpetrators of it.





herself against something, the conclusion must be that she is beset with fear. A major help to her is to find the source of her fear and help her alleviate it as much as possible. While ideally this could be done best through the professional help of a therapist or counselor, until she is able to accept such intervention, great good could be done by the caring individuals who want to help her. Being able to talk to a non-judgmental person (perhaps a friend in the community, a mentor, someone she highly regards and trusts) could allow Sister to unburden herself of the immediate terrors she faces. In family situations, those most able to handle the diagnosis and its implications are the most likely ones to support. Some might be totally irrational, such as "If I go to the infirmary, I will be shut up there and never allowed to return." Others might be more rational and even highly probable, as in "I may never be able to drive again." Even separating the real from unreal lessens the catastrophizing in Sister's mind. Providing some occasions of relief and/or success can also help for at least temporary symptom relief. Going out for some R and R time—to a movie, an arboretum, a drive along a country road—can offer respite. Giving Sister small duties she can accomplish with a sense of "job well done," even with another's assistance, can boost her morale.

A second major fact to be recognized is that denial is an interpersonal process. Stephenson (2004) argues that "personal opinions about denial can greatly affect the way an individual thought to be in denial is regarded by others" (p. 986). Tension, discomfort, frustration and eventually anger mount when persons—family members, friends, associates, medical personnel included—insist that the denial is a manufactured state, like facetiousness or malingering, that can be overcome if the person just "puts her

ist in her face and shakes it." When those around the person have all the answers for how the individual in denial should, must, can handle her illness, this removes all possibility of autonomy and self-coping from the person suffering. It also complicates and eventually disintegrates any personal connections.

This final event can produce a kind of mutuality of denial. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross describes this as a "conspiracy of silence," meaning that the person who is suffering may, in an attempt to protect or shield those to whom he or she is close, avoids talking about or even demonstrating evidence of the illness (in Stephenson, 2004, p. 986). Often, the evasion and denial escalate as the discomfort sensed on the part of others increases. At the same time, open confrontation by someone not skilled in such intervention can also be harmful and push the person deeper into denial.

WHAT CAN A NON-SPECIALIST DO?

How then can others intervene in ways that are helpful? The first part comes in open, compassionate communication. In an editorial addressed from an internationally renowned physician to his peers, Dr. M. E. Sabbioni (1999) draws on the "gold standard" of ethical practice, emphasizing the patient's right to informed consent. He underscores that informing about illness with all its ramifications must be "a lengthy process" in normal situations (p. 11). When maladaptive denial is complicating the process of acceptance, the health communicator must insure that the denier "has the resources to deal with negative emotions . . . have an environment, adequately supporting . . . and that the relationship between them is stable enough to address the denial" (p. 11). Here are steps the lay person, in Sister's case her local community and other support persons, can take (adapted from Zhang, 2002, pp. 2-3):

1. They insure that Sister understands the real facts about her condition in as gentle and genuinely caring a way as possible. This includes things that Sister can do that might help her to feel better and more involved in the management of her illness. If she refuses such "professional" helps as psychiatrists, counselors, etc., help might be found from such other more acceptable sources as nutritionists, alternative medicines (massage, relaxation means, water therapy, etc.), spiritual counselors or directors.

2. They can make themselves available, first in non-threatening, pleasant, leisurely conversations. When a degree of trust has been established, they can make themselves open to more personal issues, including those of Sister's behavior.

3. They should carefully choose their battles. Some degree of the denial may be necessary for Sister's stress management at the point she has reached in her illness. If the denial is not interfering with major decisions about life or adversely affecting others, it need not be confronted at the time.

4. They need to remove themselves from value judgments about Sister's decisions and actions. Instead of regarding these as good/bad, inappropriate/appropriate, sick/healthy, it is more helpful to wonder "Is this helping Sister deal with her overwhelming emotions? How else can we help with these?"

5. Sister's fears encompass a multitude of worries, both typical and idiosyncratic, but underlying all is the terror of being abandoned in her illness. Whatever the other Sisters can do to reassure her that this will not happen can alleviate many of the fears.

6. Finally, the old adage about only giving what one has is a ground rule in helping someone deal with such a complicated issue as maladaptive denial. Therefore, any and all involved in the process need to have their own supports—spiritual, communal, relational. Each and all need to insure that they are handling their own issues and getting their own help.

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The Resilience of the Disciple

Patrick Sean Moffett, C.F.C.

Resilience receives considerable attention in today's literature of psychology. There is a growing consensus in studying the survivors of the many violent and untoward phenomena of our time: war, poverty, migration, political unrest, terrorism, family dysfunction, ecological disasters and any number of other sources of debilitating stress afflicting individuals and groups. The data suggest a framework for viewing where and how we raise our children.

THE "LASTEN" MODEL

During turbulent years at the close of the millennium, child-care agencies dealing with displaced children and adolescents without accounts of children and youth who had survived challenged beginnings. Conferences in these reports aimed to distinguish some defining characteristics of the

resilient. Those observations became grouped into five categories that for purposes of this article will be labeled as purpose, belonging, agency, self-esteem and humor.

A visual model proposed by Stefan Vannarendorf for members of the International Catholic Child Forum (ICCF/MCE, Geneva, 1995) was that of the "even" little house. The design presented here is a variation on that theme. The five characteristics of the "resilient" are assigned to the various rooms and the attic of a child's simple sketch of a two-story house. The use of the image—a particularly significant given the "humorous" nature of the children and adolescents being observed.

The "even" accommodated some of the preliminary data and has suggested directions for more scientific avenues of research from resilience. In this article the "house model" serves as

an outline for examining aspects of the teaching and formation methodology of Jesus. The goal is to identify factors that might have contributed to the enduring impact and unassailable effectiveness of his lessons.



THE FIRST FLOOR

Purpose and belonging occupy the first floor.

Purpose supports intentional behavior. "Why" questions do not necessarily accompany, and may actually impede, human action; nevertheless, they are an undercurrent, on call from within or from outside, ready to influence continued engagement in any activity. *Why are you here? Why are you doing whatever you are doing here and now? What is the goal, the purpose, the expected outcome of what you are doing? What will you be doing next?* As the questioning becomes more existential, the child, the adolescent, or the adult is invited to articulate a philosophy of life. Again, *why are you here? Why are any of us here? Where are we going?*

Children who were among the few to survive a given tragedy responded with considerable clarity and conviction to questions on the theme: "What's life all about?" Often their responses are a primitive re-statement or even a unique variation of the core beliefs of their religion or culture. *I am a child of God. My people are oppressed. We have the true faith. They identify the source of their adventure: Enemies have taken over our home, our country. The flood, the earthquake, the famine are punishment for sin. They foresee a promising outcome in which they have a significant role: Right will win, God wills it. The strong survive. I will make a difference. Some have developed a personal explanation of what they are about. Most are able to attribute meaning to what they are experiencing and to express a reason to continue with the struggle of daily life. My family or my people need me to get an education, to grow strong, to be faithful, to be independent, to support the younger children, to make a future for me, for them.*

Belonging refers to the social network within which the individual experiences varying levels of personal acceptance, participation, engagement and eventual proprietorship. The dyadic relationship with the mother figure establishes a basis for ongoing bonding with significant others. Being loved suggests lovability, encouraging an

openness to form other relationships. Confidence in the ability to interact with others and find new friendship opens avenues for moving on from circumstances of death and separation, danger and abuse, or rejection and abandonment.

Resilient individuals demonstrate an open yet cautious level of trust. Tempered by the lessons of past relationships they will test the offers of those who appear too ready to provide unsolicited assistance.

THE SECOND FLOOR

The second floor rooms of the house offer privacy for experiencing a personal sense of agency and a measure of self-acceptance.

Agency refers to that aspect of actions that gives them authorship. There is an abundance, and often an overabundance, of forces from outside and from within that motivate and restrain movement. Sometimes agents do what they don't want to do, yet claim the action as their own. *I chose to do it.* Even when simply accepting the necessity of an action, or perhaps consenting to an inability to do otherwise, the agency of the individual is acknowledged. *I am the agent. It is a product of my will.* Agency is shaped by experienced effectiveness.

Resilient individuals value their personal effectiveness in responding to the exigencies of life. They will attempt alternative solutions, enter new paths and persist in spite of resistance because they have a core sense of "can do." They cherish the role of being an agent in determining what happens next in their lives, but also in the daily successes. One youngster, whose journey had brought him penniless through several countries, was asked how he managed to eat. He responded: *Supermarkets, they charge you only for what you carry out.*

Self-acceptance might find a place on the first floor. It is clearly a core value for survival. It is located on the second floor to emphasize its reflective nature. Self-acceptance is a personal, internal response to belonging. It mirrors the acceptance, appraisals and expectancies offered by others. It finds substance in a

philosophy or worldview that assigns the individual a place and a role in the larger understanding of life: *I am the love of my parents, I want to make them proud of me; I am a child of God, of Allah; I am responsible for my sisters and brothers; I have a calling to serve my family, my people, my country. They love me, they trust me. I am loveable, I am capable.*

THE ATTIC

Under the roof of the house is a fascinating attic.

Humor is a recurring element in the accounts of the resilient. In the heavy drama that surrounded the survivors, interviewers were impressed by the playfulness of the youngsters, their ability to laugh at the absurd, to smile at inconsistencies, to exaggerate their triumphs and to share their fantasies.

Stress binds and blinds intensifying defenses. Humor opens to a larger reality. Play reconfirms the humanity of the actors. Shared fantasy affords that deep breath needed to access the channels of energy and purpose that brought one to this moment.

In Italian the expression for such playfulness or humor is "*spiritoso*"—a way of acting in which the gravity of the moment is lightened by vivacity and a spirit of ascendancy. Lasting resilience seems to require a strong dose of such spirit.

The "*casita*" model assigns the "*spiritoso*" to the attic. A roof protects a house from the burning sun and the rain. It retains warmth and has a chimney and vents that allow the house to blow off the steam that collects in the attic.

Defenses of varying degrees of penetrability were found to serve a similar function for resilient children. They contained the emotional overflow of thwarted purpose, separation, abandonment and self-doubt that collect in the attic of the "*casita*." Occasionally, expressions of humor and spontaneous entry into shared wit revealed openings in the defenses. The resilient children demonstrated an ability to resort to playfulness in the midst of pressures, to temper determination by smiling at all

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that has become so serious, so rigid, so focused as to distort or thwart the purpose of their actions or those of others.

CATECHESIS FOR RESILIENCE

During the time that the "casita" model of resilience was emerging, counselors were particularly impressed by refugee children from Moslem families. In a Christian context, distant from links to their culture, these girls and boys, young men and young women, held to concepts of God, of the right path and of a bonding in brotherhood and sisterhood with those who shared their faith. The personal washing ritual with which they opened each day had been learned in earliest childhood. It served as a daily acknowledgment of the gift of life and a reaffirmation of the meaning they attributed to their lives. We asked ourselves what early childhood beliefs and practices would accompany Christian children suddenly removed from their culture. A paucity of responses motivated reflection on the methodology of Jesus in fostering the resilience of the disciples.

"Why did God make you?" still evokes from Catholic children some variation on "God made me to know, love, and serve him in this world and to be happy with him forever in the next." Responses in the first person singular are evidence of the enduring impact of a spirituality that focuses on the individual. The documents of Vatican II and most recently the homilies and encyclicals of Benedict XVI call us to a perspective in which the individual has incorporated into her or his sense of identity an awareness of belonging to the People of God.

The "casita" studies of resilient youngsters suggest that their individual self-acceptance and agency are grounded in an awareness of belonging to a network of others engaged in the realization of a shared purpose. The model affords an outline for comparing what we are teaching our children and what Jesus taught his disciples.

Jesus offered his disciples long-term assurance of the power of their unity. Whatever two or more would ask would be granted. He identified their love for each other as the primary sign of their discipleship. The Master Teacher encouraged his disciples to pray always and, whether together or alone, to pray in the first person plural, "Our Father...."

THE CASITA AND THE GOSPELS

Purpose, belonging, agency, self-acceptance and humor each find a place in the house. Opening the gospels in this "casita" affords a plethora of examples of lessons aimed at fostering resilience. In word, story and personal example, the Master Teacher clearly intends that his words remain. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away (Mark 13:31).

The reader might well intuit the rest of this article. It could be useful to stop here and take the time to anticipate the ways in which the words, stories and actions of Jesus might be ascribed to these five aspects of resilience education. The possibilities are unbounded. We bring to such an exercise not only the rich content of the gospels but also the many ways that these sayings, stories and examples have taken on added meaning in the light of our unique faith



journeys. Sharing such insights invites another Pentecost. Doors burst open and each hears anew, in her or his own language, the good news of Jesus.

While the gospels suggest that the Master Teacher varied his approach according to the audience and the situation, the three key elements in his lesson planning were word, story and personal example. The samples that follow are intended to evoke in the reader many similar instances found throughout the four gospels.

THE FIRST FLOOR

The first floor issues of purpose and belonging merge in the lessons of Jesus. His presentation of his own mission, which, in turn, he imparts to his disciples, is one of proclaiming that the reign of God has come and dwells among us. The unifying purpose, giving meaning to each aspect of the outreach to others, is that of building the church.

Purpose and belonging in the words of Jesus

Jesus makes it clear that he knows what he is called to be and do. Before Pilate, he proclaims: *For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth* (John 18:37).

He commissions his disciples to make on the same task. As you go make this proclamation: *"The kingdom of heaven is at hand"* (Matthew 10:7). Purpose merges with belonging as he lays down one principle of inclusion and identifies one distinguishing characteristic of group membership: *As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another*" (John 13:34-35).

The Master Teacher makes explicit the length of the assignment. He indicates the compensation for their efforts. He calls for constant vigilance: *Therefore stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come* (Matthew 24:42).

His stories about purpose and belonging:

The stories Jesus tells provide the disciples with powerful images of their life work. They are to plant seeds with

varying degrees of success. They will await the bridegroom who is late in coming. They receive talents. Only those who use the talents received, who have been wise, who offer fertile ground, will be ready for the Master's return.

The parable of the Great Supper defines the mission of the disciples. They are sent to gather others for the eternal banquet—and then have to do another round of solicitations to fill the empty seats.

Purpose and belonging in the actions of Jesus

Jesus serves as the living example of that to which he calls his disciples. He elicits mixed reviews. His own reject him and his mission. He vents his frustration: *A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and in his own house* (Matthew 13:57).

As Jesus approaches the hour of his passion he acts out one of his more powerful lessons. Lest the disciples miss the point, he declares: *If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet* (John 13:14-15).

In the last supper discourse reported in St. John's gospel Jesus reiterates the mission of fostering unity. He opens to the disciples his personal prayer to the Father: *Holy Father, keep in your name those whom you have given me, that they may be one even as we are* (John 17:11).

THE SECOND FLOOR

The second floor affords a perspective on how this dual purpose of announcing and of building the Church informs the disciple's personal experience. The disciple comes to awareness both of agency and personal acceptance: experiencing oneself as having a mandate to foster the reign of God as well as having a unique place among the believers.

Agency (mine and ours) in the words of Jesus

The disciples are presented with a list of actions for which they are to take ownership sometimes individually, often collectively: *Give them some food*

yourselves (Mark 6:37). *Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you and pray for those who persecute you* (Matthew 5:44-45). And once again he reminds them of the length of their commitment: *Whoever endures to the end will be saved* (Matthew 10:22).

They are to understand that they are persons of means; they "can do" what is needed to effect change. *Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you* (Matthew 7:7). Their agency takes on added power when they act collectively: *Again, I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father* (Matthew 18:19).

Sometimes the agency of the disciple, rather than being a matter of taking action, involves listening or simply waiting: *Mary has chosen the best part, and it will not be taken away from her* (Luke 10:41). *Blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival* (Luke 12:37).

Jesus' stories about agency

Chapter 25 of Mathew introduces the passages on the final judgment with the parable of the ten virgins and the parable of the talents. The concluding test of discipleship involves a review of what was done or not done for needy neighbors. Both vigilance and industry are required. The disciples must be prepared for an indeterminate wait, must use whatever talents they receive and give an account of what they did with the possessions entrusted to them. The consequences of not using their agency are a horrendous form of exclusion.

The agency of the Master Teacher

Jesus leaves no doubt about his own agency in the calling of the disciples, claiming full responsibility for the action: *It was not you who chose me but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain* (John 15:16-17).

His expectancies for the disciples are explicit: *Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me* (Mark 8:34).



Jesus had prepared the twelve to be his disciples and to act in his name. *You will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth* (Acts 1:8). The stories of the Acts of the Apostles attest to the effectiveness of their initial formation.

Self-acceptance fostered in the words of the Teacher

From the beginning Jesus told the disciples they had been chosen, called by name. He predicts both a tough journey and a coveted victory. *In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world* (John 16:33).

Accepting oneself as belonging brings strength. Called individually, by name, the disciples join in two's, twelve's, seventy-two's or thousands to build the church.

On the return from their first practice mission the disciples were told: *Do not rejoice because the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven* (Luke 10:20). Each understood that making that list was the highest expression of belonging, of full acceptance in the reign of God.

His stories about self-acceptance

The disciple experiences a unique personal embrace. This unconditional, gratuitous love is the ground of his or her ability to embrace others, again individually. Perhaps no story more clearly emphasizes the individual nature of the call than the parable of the lost sheep.

The good shepherd leaves the other ninety-nine to pursue the one. He embraces the wanderer and brings her back to the fold rejoicing. There is one shepherd, one fold.

The self-acceptance of Jesus

Jesus shares with his disciples the knowledge of who he is. He speaks intimately of his Father and the effusion of the love of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit. He invites the disciples to attend to how they enter into this divine intimacy (John 14:15-17). Christianity gathers these insights to illuminate the mystery of the Trinity.

THE ATTIC OF THE CASITA

The attic presents a challenge. Sacred scripture is not ordinarily subject to humorous interpretation. Nevertheless, an invitation to search for

the playfulness of Jesus evokes from those nurtured on the gospels delightful variations on many of the parables and on Jesus' interactions with the disciples and with his various audiences. Those blessed with companions, students, retreatants, or congregations engaged in sharing scripture might open a session with a question such as: How might Jesus have hidden a bit of humor or perhaps an inside joke in the midst of this lesson?

What was the inter-play of the disciples? What else might Jesus have overheard in their exchanges about who was the greatest, the favorite, or most likely to pull in a fish? Was there any chance that no one teased John and James about their pushy mother's request, or on Peter about his water-walking skills?

Humor as a salvific trait found among children who are survivors needs to be understood as extending beyond the comic to an array of humors, the many feelings and emotions, that accompany the effusion of the spirit, both human and divine.

Under the roof of the "casita" is an attic, a treasure trove of words, jokes, laughs, tears, stories, feelings and images. Remnants that once clothed us or were in the hands of our ancestors

stimulate our fantasy. They invite us to engage in role-taking, in the art of making belief. We try on their curiosity, their wonder, their doubts and their exaltation, and make them our own.

The first letter attributed to John reveals the "attic" of experiences and motions from which he and his fellow disciples drew their enthusiasm: *What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we looked upon and touched with our hands ... we proclaim now to you (1 John 1:1-4).*

The playfulness of the Master Teacher

Matthew concludes a particularly long lesson enriched with admonitions and parables by having Jesus ask his students: *"Do you understand all these things?" "They answered, "Yes." And he replied, "Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings forth from his storeroom both the new and the old" (Matthew 13:51-52).*

Jesus took from his "storeroom" the poetry of David and Solomon. His mother had done the same. She found response for an angel's invitation. Her magnificat echoes through the centuries. He punctuated hours of torture with psalm lines that would sustain generations of disciples in their own hour of trial. His familiarity with the scrolls attributed to Isaiah and other septuagint writers provided material for touching sentiments, eliciting recognition and stirring hope.

Like theatrical teams of our own era, Jesus and his cousin John were masters at playing off each other. John sends disciples to ask Jesus who he is and what he is about. Jesus engages the listeners in his response. He prods them toward awareness, *"What did you go out to the desert to see" (Matthew 1:7)?*

John's costume and unique personal comportment draw attention. Jesus joins the crowds who seek out the baptizer. Both know that timing is an essential element of their profession. Each attends the proper hour to act and then to move off the scene. Masters at what comes to be known as "street theater," they draw great crowds from every walk of life.

Both he and his cousin sought to touch the hearts of their audiences, to lift them above the ordinary and to

stimulate imagination. But even the Master Teacher realizes that many of his lessons do not have the desired effect. *"We played the flute for you, but you did not dance, we sang a dirge, but you did not mourn." For John came neither eating nor drinking and they said, "He is possessed by a demon." The Son of Man came eating and drinking and they said, "Look, he is a glutton and a drunkard" (Matthew 11:16-19).*

His constancy in the face of such failure is a powerful lesson in resilience for his disciples. He anticipated the obstacles they would face, likened them to his own, and urged them to trust the Holy Spirit even to the point of supplying words they will need at critical moments. In situations wrought with danger, in storms and when faced with what seems to be a ghost, he proposes an emotional shift: *"Peace be with you." "Fear not."*

UNTIL THE END OF TIME

Reliance on the Holy Spirit is the dominant theme in the later stages of the disciples' formation. *"The Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name—he will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you (John, 14:26).*

Resilience, as manifested in perseverance and faithfulness, is tested anew with each segment of the lifespan. Transitions, personal losses, and declining health will challenge those we teach, as well as ourselves, to revisit our personal and communal sense of purpose, belonging, agency and acceptance. Each stage requires a sense of humor, a willingness to hold lightly what we have and have not accomplished. We realize that like our predecessors, we participate in a larger mission that goes beyond our days on earth. As His disciples we delight in knowing that we and those we accompany have made the list that matters. Our names are written in heaven for all eternity.

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**LIFE,
DEATH,
JESUS,
AND A FAINT-H**





RTED CHURCH

George Wilson, S.J.

I heard yesterday that after her long journey with Alzheimer's my friend Tese passed away. Not long before that it was Felix. And there are many more names on that sad waiting list. When I write to a surviving spouse or family I always remind them that it's OK to acknowledge a feeling of personal relief that the care-givers have been released from their long burden. It shows no disrespect to their departed loved one and is a simple statement of fact, all too often treated as cold or even selfish. In their responses they express gratitude that my comment served to support the appropriateness of their feelings. They report that such an acknowledgment comes easy to them. In a wonderful turn of phrase one of them wrote that after years and years of witnessing the slow fading of human contact with her husband she was "all mourned out."

These recent experiences stirred up in me a wonder that has recurred from time to time over the years. Are we as a church really proclaiming to the world the Gospel about the meaning of life and death?

A NECESSARY CONVERSATION WITH SOCIETY

The wonders of modern science have enhanced our ability to maintain human life under conditions that earlier ages could scarcely have imagined. This has been a blessing to many individuals and families, for sure.

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argument of an
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But the development of that rich menu of medical and surgical options has brought with it a series of extremely nuanced moral conundrums our forebears never had to face. We are richly blessed, but also newly burdened, with responsibility for complicated moral choices they were spared.

These developments have consequences for a church that is called to proclaim the coming of the Lord's kingdom. In virtue of its mission the church must surely engage modern society in conversation, sometimes contentious, about the morality of various proposed responses to the availability of technology and procedures for prolonging human life.

I am not qualified to speak concerning the specifics of those conversations: things like feeding tubes and vegetative states and the like. I can only applaud the care and thoughtfulness with which gifted moralists serve the church's mission by grappling with the complex balance of competing rights and values involved. Nor is my concern about the validity of resulting magisterial pronouncements about such issues. My wonder lies somewhere else. It has to do, rather, with the effect of what I perceive to be an unbalanced focus on such questions in the first place. It has often been noted that exceptional cases make for poor science and law. Might they also be producing poor spirituality: a warping effect on our proclamation of Jesus' vision of life and death?

The moral judgments which are eventually presented as binding on the consciences of the faithful could, after all, be reached equally effectively by people of other religious faiths—or of none. Jesus left us no specifically “Christian” tools or methods for arriving at the correct moral judgments in these matters, much less the answers themselves.

What he did leave us with is something far more consequential. After dying he was himself raised by the One he called “My Father” to a new and

richer form of life. And he promised the same blessing to us: “where I am they also may be with me, that they may see my glory that you gave me” (John 17:24). Jesus and the reality of his and our risen life are central to who we are and what we as his followers proclaim to the world about life. And about death and dying.

My wonder then becomes more focused: In its conversation with modernity has the church sold its soul by leaving all consideration of immortality out of the dialogue? In the attempt to be credible before a world that appears to have little or no regard for human life, are we subtly adopting a biologism that makes the continuation of biological existence into an unyielding absolute?

Responding to the argument of an opponent out of a position of fear is invariably a mistake. It can lead to an inadvertent acceptance of the opponent's premises. More consequentially, it then leads to an abandonment of the power of one's own vision. It thereby gives the opponent the power to frame the debate. A weak and timid church is then on the defensive before a world which views the possibility of life after death as a mediaeval superstition. Instead of boldly proclaiming a profound vision of hope, we allow our adversaries to perpetuate the myth that Christians have no stake in the present world because they live for some magical pie in the sky.

A RICHER STRENGTH

Our faith proclaims that, as in other less crucial matters, when we face the enormous reality of death we are not helpless (or hope-less) victims. Death is real but it is not victorious, for in Christ it is overcome. Which means that the life which precedes and comes to an end in death is not, and cannot be, an absolute that by itself puts an end to all possibility of further moral questioning.

Within the sanctuary of our faith community we do teach this hopeful

message promising richer life beyond the grave, of course. It appears, however, that in our dialogue with the modern world we shrink from putting it on the table lest we appear hopelessly naive. Which is another way of saying that the scandal of professing a belief in a life beyond the grave seems to be too much for us.

A church that relates to the world out of fear offers tasteless salt to a hungry people. In the dialogue with society about moral right and wrong in complex end-of-life situations we can anticipate that the possibility of life after death will be dismissed out of hand, of course. But if that fact is given such weight that, when people face the decision whether or not to continue the life they have known, all we have to offer the world is the feeble crutch of rational calculation, we have sold the store. Is the message of resurrection only for those in the pews?

A COMPLEX IDEAL

The Christian vision of human life and death calls us to a high-wire balancing act. We are challenged, on the one hand, to passionate engagement with God's creation and its splendid promise of life. It is a caricature of Christianity to present it as ethereal piety that reduces our earthly existence to a mere dress rehearsal for the real show (although we must admit, sadly, that the catechesis of an earlier era often carried that message). For a follower of Jesus the Incarnate One every particle of the cosmos is revelatory and worthy of our wonder and care. Each earthly life is irrevocably inserted into the unfolding of divine intentionality and must be treasured. Christians have far more reason to be committed to the building of an earthly city than do unbelievers. To fail to do so is to dishonor our creative God.

As important as it is to preach that act in season and out, however, by itself represents only half of the vision.

A faithful response to that same creator demands a simultaneous readiness to let go and hand it back freely to the One Jesus called Father. We have here on earth neither a city nor a life that is lasting. As fully conscious and free agents, we represent divine creativity to a high degree, but we remain creatures, called to free cooperation in a project that ultimately transcends self-interest, even that of perpetually continuing earthly life. To deny that is to make of the biological imperative an idol.

Thus the tension for every Christian: to fail to engage with this world is to reject the gift of our creation; to cling to it as our only hope for ultimate meaning in life is Promethean hubris.

The power that can enable us to walk the narrow road between those extremes resides in the hope of a richer life achieved in the very handing-over. That hope is itself not some vaporous superstition. It is an energy at work within a living human spirit. With the energy of hope we are empowered to plunge our hands enthusiastically into the richness of earthly life while prepared, in the very same act, to hand ourselves into the mystery of a new and richer form of existence.

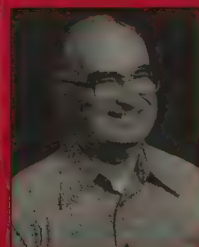
Why isn't the life of the human spirit one of the components of moral calculus?

The apostle Paul gave witness to the existential dilemma that results from holding tenaciously to both aspects of the vision. "If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body" (Philippians 1:22-24). His mission, his engagement with the story of creation, prevailed over a passionate desire to be with the Lord. But only for the present, not absolutely. When the time was right he would freely and joyfully leave this existence for a richer life.

But what is more rich is the fact that countless ordinary men and women live out that paradox, sometimes to an extraordinary degree, every day. Ask a pastor or chaplain or hospice volunteer. They will testify to the peace with which many people, while still passionately engaged in human relationships and projects, find the paradoxical energy to hand this life over into the hands of the God whose face they expect to see.

Let me put the issue more abstractly: Our Christian anthropology holds that the human person is an ultimate good. Why, then, in assessing the morality of end-of-life decisions do we limit our criteria to biological processes, effectively eliminating from consideration that which most significantly characterizes personhood, the life of the free human spirit?

If we are too timid to proclaim that vision to our secular dialogue partners, let us at least give to our sisters and brothers in the faith the powerful support of hope in a richer life instead of the thin gruel of rational calculus. When a dying Christian says "I have completed my mission on earth and am ready and anxious to be embraced within the loving arms of my Father," it seems preposterous to talk of the inadmissibility of removing tubes and an insult to the Lord of death and life.



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Gender is of major importance to us as humans. Whether in traditional cultures where one or the other gender dominates, or in a modern society that tries to be more egalitarian, gender is unanimously significant. Our fascination with the sexes across cultural boundaries is evidence that any puritanical or "Victorian" attempt to repress or domesticate our sexual makeup is doomed to failure. Perhaps it is the lot of our present generations to try to better integrate what previous civilizations tried in various ways to subordinate. Freud and his descendents in all branches of psychology will not let us forget the centrality of sexuality and gender in our understanding of our humanity.

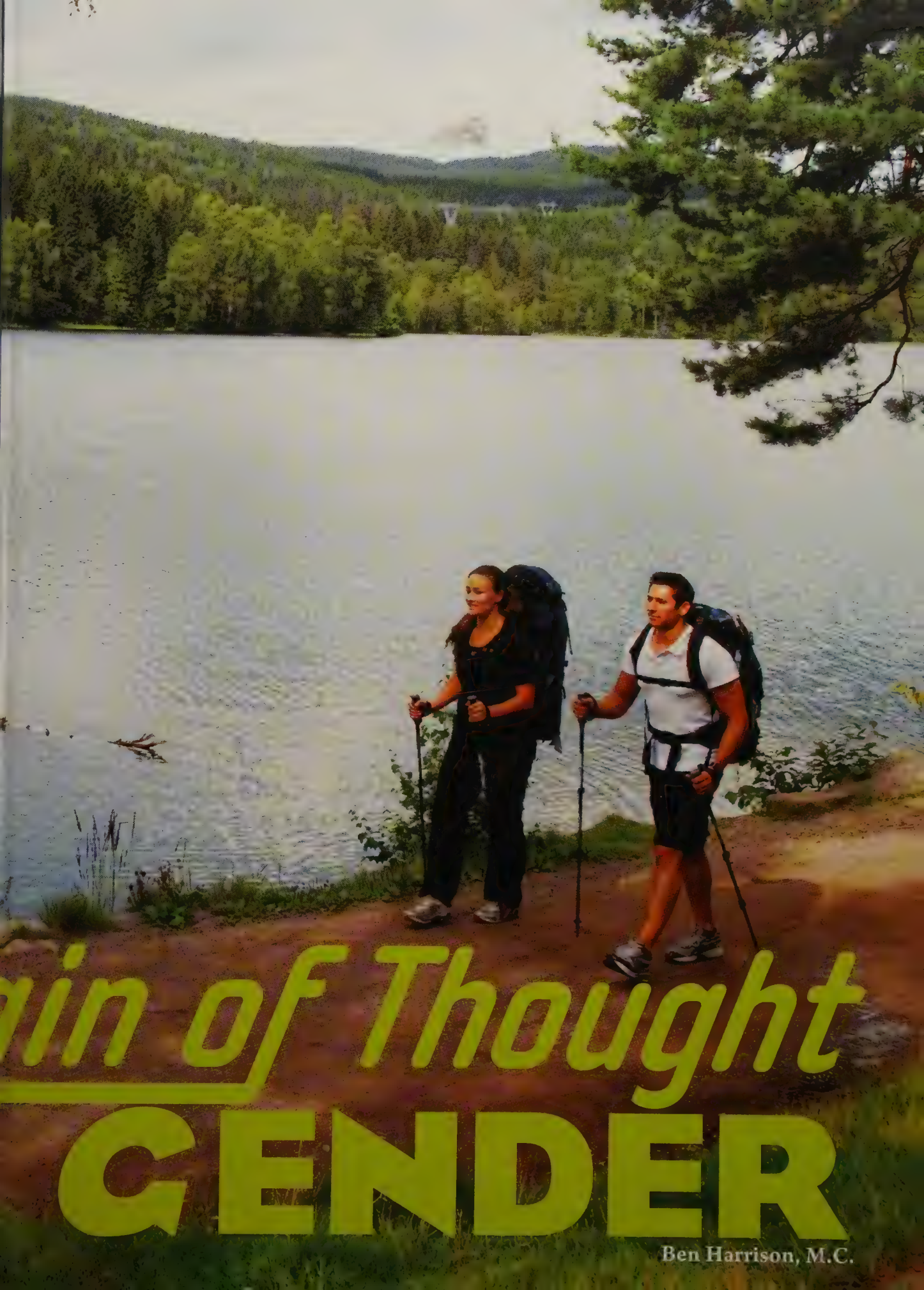
As a man committed by a vow of chastity to a life of celibacy, I am not spared from my generation's effort to make sense of this aspect of our life. As I struggle to "live in the truth," honoring both the concrete experience of daily life in a highly secular, hedonistic society and also the transcendent tenets of my faith, my psyche does not permit me to forget, even for a short time, that I am a sexual-sensual being in a male body.

In this struggle I sometimes get the impression that I am expected to dilute or in some way neutralize my maleness. Yet my whole being rebels against any such attempt—my unconscious and the various levels of my psyche conspire to force me to recognize and accept this fact of my being, that I am a human, sexual creature of male gender.

When in prayer I ask God what he is trying to show me through this wrestling with truth, I remember the passage from the beginning of Genesis: "God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27). What does this suggest to me? That somehow for God to show what he is like requires both male and female—that man, the image of God, is comprised of both the masculine and the feminine.

I can conceive of God containing both genders in several ways. God could hold them as two separate forces, yin and yang, the circle with two tears—but that view conflicts with my understanding of God as simple, undivided, one. I can conceive of God containing both genders in a sort of primordial common ground from which both spring into their distinct reality. Or I can conceive of God as containing a kind of super-charged, quintessence of maleness and femaleness, which are at once blended in an indivisible whole and yet held in a perfect dynamic mutuality within the all-embracing oneness of God's simple being. I prefer the latter description.





Train of Thought **GENDER**

Ben Harrison, M.C.



*Male and female
are married to
pour forth and
bring to fullness
of life something
more powerful
than each—the
ecstatic joy of
total self-giving.*

Why? First, because, on a practical level, it calls me not to dilute or eviscerate my identity as a male human being but to honor it and allow it to reach an ever fuller expression—but it also calls me to honor those portions of my personhood that reflect the feminine influences and values that have helped to shape me, and not to try to dominate, repress or deny them. In other words, it calls me to affirm my gender and allow it to flourish while also allowing the other, feminine qualities of my being and the female half of humanity to become fully alive. It calls me to live the spiritual marriage, to embody in my own person the oneness of the male and female in a way that respects but transcends the gender divide.

When St. Paul says (Galatians 3:28) “there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus,” on a basic level he is merely pointing out that there should not be divisions amongst believers; united as they are by baptism in the Lord. However, to apply this insight to the present discussion, I would propose that Paul is not saying that life in Christ is something that utterly precludes or absolutely transcends such dichotomies. Rather, we could say that in Christ such dichotomies are loved, honored, included, united and brought to a superabundant fruition. Thus the law and revealed truth of the Jew is brought into synthesis with the reason and profound wisdom of the Greek to produce something much higher

than both—life in the Spirit. The lowliness and obedient submission of the slave is joined with the liberty and self-celebration of the free to produce something more glorious than either—the tenderly solicitous but exultant love that is agape. And male and female are married to pour forth and bring to fullness of life something more powerful than each—the ecstatic joy of total self-giving.

Parenthetically, this could be one reason that the marriage of a man and a woman, which is meant to embody the balance and complementarity of these two poles of our humanity, is traditionally seen as a powerful sign and symbol of God’s fullness of being: if God created them male and female in his image, then male and female united in love and harmony are somehow a reflection of God’s mystery. An obvious consequence of this is that the union of the two is not static and dichotomous but tends constantly to transcend itself in new life. Thus, in the catholic tradition, the union of a man and a woman in matrimony is a sacramental sign of the fullness, balance, harmony, and fecundity of God’s love.

This brings me to the second reason I prefer to see God’s manner of containing gender “as a kind of super-charged quintessence of maleness and femaleness, which are at once blended in an indivisible whole and yet held in a perfect dynamic mutuality.” Not only does this way of seeing gender help me to live my present reality, it also points out the



rection of my hope and shows me where all this is leading me.

In my personal call to follow the Christian way of consecration in the truth, in my personal attempt to integrate my actual experience and my spiritual destiny, God is not asking me to deny any aspect of my truth. I must accept the facts, among many other facts, that I am a sexual creature and a male human being. Sometimes I may be tempted to think of gender as merely a functional aspect of the genital, a creative part of our being, in which case it could seem to have importance only during our earthly sojourn, as something that is not of the essence of that personal core of our being which is called and destined for life beyond time.

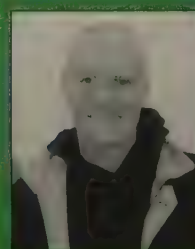
In pursuit of that higher goal, there is surely a sense in which I must die to myself, must renounce the world, the flesh and the devil. But there is also a sense in which I must accept the gift of who I am, love God with my whole being, consecrate myself to God as I am, and let him transform me as he wishes. Whatever death-to-self or mortification required by the struggle of chastity (whether celibate or married), its purpose is not to kill but to fulfill—to let the shell break so the chick can breathe; to let the flower fall so the fruit can form (and the fruit drop so the seed can spread). The question is, is gender among those things that are “accidental,” not of the essence and therefore expected to die away, be discarded or left behind? Is our identity

as male and female among those things which we must relinquish or even actively mortify?

If, as suggested above, gender is somehow rooted in the reality of God’s mystery, then I would conclude that the answer is no. I must work at dying to my misdirected desires, to my self-indulgent urges, to my tendency to use people, and other such evidences of my domination by sin and death. But if I see gender as something that is not merely a factor of our earthly life, an accident of our bodily nature, if I see it as somehow, in a quintessential way, part of the mystery of who God is, and therefore who we are as beings created in his image, then I must conclude that we are not called to renounce that identity even at death.

We can trust that God does not wish us to become less human, less passionately loving, less male-and-female or less spiritual than we already are, but to reach, in all those areas, the overflowing fullness of what those qualities portend. God does not ask us to deny our male or female identity but to rejoice in them both, entrust them to him and let him lead us to a more complete manifestation of them within ourselves and within his human family. This gradual enhancement, transformation and convergence of the genders within the human person (and in society) can thus represent and in some way foreshadow the longed-for union of the whole redeemed creation under Christ. Even while we are being led as men and women to greater spiritual integration in our present journey, we have the hope

that whatever of the partial and divided remains at the end of that journey can be lifted, liberated and transformed, either instantly, “with an anvil ding,” or with “a lingering-out sweet skill,” by the fire of God’s love. The scriptural image of heaven as marriage points to that ultimate consummation, that lifting-up in ecstatic joy which is the union of all in All (1 Corinthians 15:28).



Brother Ben Harrison, M.C., is a Missionaries of Charity Brother. He has worked in his community’s apostolates with marginalized people in Sicily, Manchester (U.K.) and Los Angeles.

Twelve Spiritual Types

Michael Galligan-Stierle, Ph.D.





With more than 18 million university students currently enrolled in approximately 4,000 U.S. institutions of higher learning, it is very encouraging that the spiritual interests of these students are being researched in depth. We can now document that which many of us have observed: students today thirst for spiritual growth in record numbers, but do so in different ways than those of us who teach them. For example, while they are very interested in spiritual issues, for this generation "spirituality" does not equate to "religion."

Today's students are part of the generational cohort identified as millennials. They were born between 1982-2001. As the Beloit College Student Mindset List documents annually, these students grew up in a very different world than ours. The Mindset List helps us remember this demographic reality each year in a playful, yet very informative, manner.

One area of significant difference across the generations is the fact that collegians have a hunger for integrating their spiritual journey with their academic learning. For many of us in the academy, this can be very challenging to understand, let alone implement a methodology to reach this end. How are faculty and staff to respond to this collegiate thirst for spiritual growth given the diversity of faith traditions, or no faith tradition? How are we to integrate this dimension into our courses when most of us have little or no training in this integrative methodology, let alone a sophisticated understanding of spiritual content? For Jesuit universities, there is an additional question: how do we factor in our

preferential option for a Catholic and Jesuit worldview in this way of teaching?

While this article does not intend to answer all these questions, it will suggest a paradigm for understanding collegiate spirituality today. This will provide us with some descriptive language to identify and understand the spirituality of today's students more fully.

CATHOLIC MILLENNIALS TODAY

Catholic young adults today are spiritually diverse. They are neither monolithic in their Catholic outlook nor similar to previous generations in their expressions of the faith. It is not uncommon to identify the spirituality of these young adult Catholics with the traditional politically charged labels of liberal and conservative. These descriptors are inadequate, and more often than not pejorative and inaccurate. Since Catholic young adults express their Catholic faith in a multitude of spiritual ways, it is important to accurately identify these expressions.

It should be noted that the generational young adult impulse to emphasize one spiritual path over another is systemic to the Christian faith; for example, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Paul each emphasize a different expression of Jesus' message in their writings. This variety continues over the centuries as various spiritual paths have been warmly embraced within the Catholic community through a range of religious disciplines and methodologies: Dominican, Franciscan, Carmelite, Mercy, and Ignatian to mention but a few.

Today, millennials advance this insight and passion of various spiritual paths in unique ways. In an effort to recognize this reality, I have identified twelve spiritual categories embraced by young adults today (see chart below). This identification of twelve “types” is not exhaustive and some types slightly overlap others. Articulation of twelve types is not meant to constrain the spiritual or religious outlook of the young adult today, but rather help to clarify various paths of Catholic incarnation in this new generation. While some individuals may exhibit one dominant spiritual “type,” many individuals express themselves through multiple spiritual “categories.” Some who have heard me speak on this subject have suggested that these twelve categories apply to young adults of various faith traditions, as well as Catholics of all ages, not just millennials.

To identify the broad tendencies in each of the twelve expressions of being a Catholic young adult, the twelve categories have been organized into four subsets entitled: structured, energetic, socially aware, and present. A short explanation of the twelve categories follows.

Church Apologists seek an intellectual understanding of the Catholic faith. Apologists desire to learn the faith in depth, and therefore spend much time studying the tenets of the Catholic faith in detail. Their prayer methods usually include ancient memorized prayers which they strongly advocate. They bring an ability to articulate the faith to fellow Catholics as well as to non-believers, and a keen ability to identify and understand church doctrine. Sometimes the apologist can over-intellectualize Catholicism, become very defensive justifying the Catholic faith, or lack tolerance by advancing excessive absolutes.

Church Devotionals are active in faith primarily through silent, personal prayer. They are especially drawn to Christ’s presence where words are unnecessary for prayer, and they often have a strong devotion to Our Lady. They bring a powerful presence of prayer into the worshipping community, and they are often engaged in intercessory prayer for others in the church. Sometimes Church Devotionals can be hesitant to share their faith with others, tend to minimize the need to “dress-up” worship with “extras,” and may need to

learn the rich difference between individual prayer and communal prayer, especially regarding the celebration of the Eucharist.

Church Sacramentals love to attend Mass on Sunday and frequently attend weekday Mass. They bring a deep reverence to Christ’s presence in the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist. They may volunteer as a liturgical minister, a sacristan, or a liturgy committee member. A few are willing to assist in adorning the church for various liturgical seasons. Some see the Eucharist as the sole expression of faith, while others may over-emphasize the liturgical ritual of the Catholic faith.

Church Evangelicals believe that a personal relationship with Christ and first-hand knowledge of scripture are central to being Catholic. They bring a strong commitment to witnessing their faith to others. Often times praise and worship music is an enjoyable way to pray. Sometimes these believers become impatient with those who have little regard for scripture, and some may inappropriately focus on the individual over the communal dimensions of Catholicism.

Church Communals are eager to be connected with other young adults. They are often drawn to church in search of friends with similar values, potential partners, or group activities. Some Communals have engaging personalities that can attract others to become involved in church activities, while others feel safe in developing their social skills within the context of the church community. Sometimes these young adults only become involved in church activities if they have a social component and many find prayer and faith exploration difficult unless it is connected to a social event. Some are drawn to mega-churches where young adults are engaged socially and spiritual growth is connected to small group sharing.

Structured	Energetic	Socially Aware	Present
The Church Apologist	The Church Evangelical	The Church in Service	The Church on Sunday
The Church Devotional	The Church Communal	The Church Begleitlich	The Church Cultural
The Church Accommodator	The Church Creative	The Church Abolitive	The Church Eclectic

Church Creatives are young adults who are active in the faith community through drama, music, and art. These individuals are often culturally-literate, innovative, and engaging in presenting the faith. They are very adept at exploring and expressing the gospel message through cultural means and are eager to share these gifts with the community. Sometimes these individuals overlook the reverential aspect of worship (e.g., acting as if the altar is stage and the congregation an audience), and some may only participate in activities of the faith community when their artistic gift is needed.

Church in Service is the group of young adults who directly serve those in need. They are strong advocates and witnesses of Catholic Social Teaching through direct service activities. Many work tirelessly serving the marginalized members of society and often energize others to get involved. They are tentative and committed to the social implications of the gospel. Some of this type may emphasize the temporal over the spiritual, and others may minimize or disregard an active liturgical life. A few may lose sight of the importance of self-care when serving others.

Church Prophetics strive to reform unjust systems affecting the poor or disadvantaged. Seeking structural change, they are often active in campus peace fellowships, advocacy groups, and labor conflicts. They can have a deep understanding of domestic and international political/socio-economic conditions, as well as Catholic Social Teaching. Often they will point out

church failings as well as societal flaws. They tend to be passionate about their cause, as well as compassionate towards those affected by injustice. Some may become overly-critical or cynical, lose sight of the religious dimension of their call, and/or become so engaged in the conversation that little time is actually devoted to changing the structure or caring for the marginalized.

Church All-Inclusive is the group of young adults who see religion as a confining category for one's spiritual life. Often they have been exposed to other religions through friendship, a university-level course, time in the armed services, or a significant book. Members of this group possess a reverence for all of God's creation, and often are committed to being a good person and "loving" others. Many Church All-Inclusives are welcoming of newcomers, often seeking to expand the world-view of church members. Their social awareness manifests itself in defending those outside the Catholic faith. They are open to various practices and prayer experiences regardless of denominational or creedal differences between religions, and they bring a variety of new ideas to the Catholic community. Some may not be able to articulate clearly or convincingly Catholic beliefs or liturgical practices, often emphasizing one's individual spiritual-search over the value of Catholic "truth" or Catholic community values.

The Church on Sunday is that committed group of young adults who regularly participate in the liturgy on

Sunday, but for various reasons do not participate in other church activities. This group finds community elsewhere. Many identify busyness, disinterest, lack of church peers, or a significant negative experience as the primary reason for a Sunday-only attitude. Some have an obligation-mentality toward Mass attendance and see no reason why their Catholicism needs to be something more. Finding ways to more fully engage the Church on Sunday constituency will add talented individuals currently untapped by the church community.

Church Culturals were baptized as infants and belong to families who identify as Catholic and celebrate major Catholic holidays. Many are familiar with certain traditions of the faith, and with the sacraments received in their Catholic upbringing, but rarely attend Mass or other church activities. These individuals are more abundant where religion is connected to political, national or ethnic identity. Some may decorate their living space with devotional materials. Some only possess a nominal understanding of the church, their Christian calling, or an adult faith. For some, saints are invoked more often than God when there is a prayer request.

The Church Eclipsed are those Catholic young adults who were baptized Catholic and who may or may not have grown up Catholic, but now, for all practical purposes are distant from Catholicism. Many were born into a family where religious practice was not encouraged, and some have been angered or disappointed by the Church. Many have chosen not to be engaged



and are apathetic toward the Catholic community or any religious denomination, while others have found a new spiritual home in another community of faith. This is the largest group of young adult Catholics. In some ways, they mirror the Jews at Jesus' time identified as "the people of the land."

By using these twelve descriptive categories, the Catholic higher education community can move beyond its current basic identification of young adult Catholics as either liberal or conservative, and replace it with a descriptive language of faith. Now, instead of identifying a young adult as conservative, one might say he/she is "apologetic and service minded." Or instead of being labeled a liberal, a young adult may be identified as "prophetic, creative and sacramental." By listening, observing, and asking young adults to identify their "dominant spiritual passions," an affirming language of young adult spirituality can emerge. By verbalizing a neutral or positive tone with each of the twelve descriptors, the Catholic higher education community can become more "young adult friendly."

While the twelve categories of millennials offer a tangible way to understand collegians today, in *Deus Caritas Est*, Pope Benedict XVI reminds all of us about the basics of our faith: God loved us first, we are invited to love God and love neighbor, and we are all called to invite others into a love affair with God. This is based on the two great commandments: "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, your whole soul, and your whole might" (Deuteronomy 6:4-5) and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18). Our Catholic educational agenda could not be clearer. Proclaiming these simple truths in word and deed to young adults is a primary goal of a Catholic university.

Recently, I had the opportunity to walk through one of the 28 Jesuit campuses. There were small banners attached to the many light poles that framed the sidewalks throughout the

grounds. Each banner captured a "theme" of the Jesuit/Ignatian world view of Catholic higher education: such as *Finding God in All Things*, *Magis*, *Faith that Does Justice*, *Eloquentia Perfecta*, and *Cura Personalis* to name a few. Then I thought about the many faculty members who served on the campus and wondered how each faculty member might rank order these "themes" if invited to select one or the other that best captured their spiritual "way of proceeding." I realized that it is not just students who can be given the limiting descriptor of "liberal" or "conservative;" faculty can also be confined in this way. I hope the twelve descriptors listed above might help the conversation to proceed with more civility and a deeper appreciation of the complexity of the spiritual reality within which we find ourselves immersed.

RESOURCES FOR UNDERSTANDING CATHOLIC YOUNG ADULTS

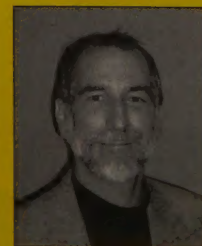
Knowing young adults today is much more than the twelve paths described above. To sharpen one's pastoral care and understanding, a few resources are strongly recommended: Sharon Daloz Parks's text provides an in-depth understanding of the spiritual and psychological processes of young adults: *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Young Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith* (Jossey-Bass, 2000). The annual review of the Beloit College Mindset List is humorous, but I highly recommend it as it is always instructive (<http://www.beloit.edu/~pubaff/mindset>). A few recent books can be helpful as well: Colleen Carroll's, *The New Faithful: Why Young Adults are Embracing Christian Orthodoxy* (Loyola, 2002), Christian Smith's, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (Oxford: 2005), Robert Wuthnow's, *After the Baby Boomers: How Twenty and Thirty Somethings Are Shaping the Future of American Religion* (Princeton, 2007), and Dean Hoge, et al., *Young Adult*

Catholics: Religion in a Culture of Choice (Notre Dame, 2001). A research project that is very instructional regarding the gulf between the millennials' desire for spiritual integration within the classroom and faculty caution for such integration are these two studies: *Spirituality in Higher Education: A National Study of College Students' Search for Meaning and Purpose* and *Spirituality and the Professoriate: A National Study of Faculty Beliefs, Attitudes, and Behaviors*. (www.spirituality.ucla.edu).

Three other documents can be helpful for connecting university work and the spiritual journey. They are the following: *The Church's Presence in the University and in the University Culture* (Vatican, 1994), *Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults* (USCC, 1996), and *Pope Benedict XVI's Address to Educators* (CUA, April 2008).

Note: The main thesis of this piece first appeared in a longer article in *New Theology Review*, Volume 22, Number 1, February 2009. The earlier article recommended ways in which Catholic campus ministers can reach the diversity of collegians today by offering a range of programming options based on the twelve spiritual types. The descriptions of the twelve spiritual types that appears herein is essentially the same as the earlier article.

Michael Galligan-Stierle, Ph.D., serves as vice-president of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities. Of his forty years in higher education he has worked within the Ignatian tradition as a campus minister at Loyola College, Maryland, and at Wheeling Jesuit University. He also served on the Ignatian leadership team, *Companions of Maryland Province* (COLM).



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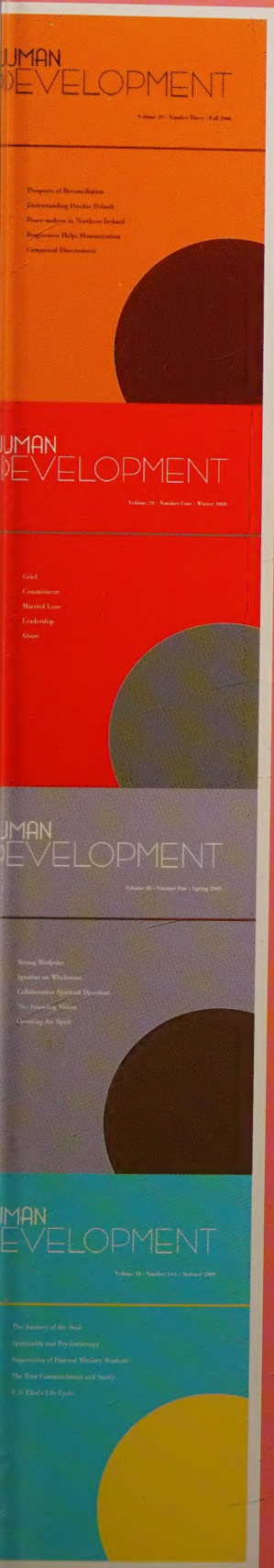
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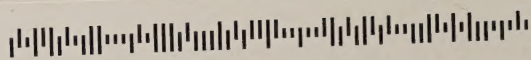
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